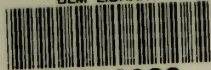


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Andrews Land Use Plan Proposed Actions and

Additional Alternatives to be Analyzed
in the Andrews Grazing Management EIS



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August 2, 1982

Dear Concerned Citizen:

This brochure summarizes the preferred land use alternative developed for the Andrews Resource Area Management Framework Plan (MFP) and the Andrews Grazing Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).


The preferred alternative reflects public comments and concerns received during all stages of the planning process, but particularly in response to the Summary of Proposed Land Use Alternatives (February 1982). Elements from all four of the land use alternatives are incorporated in the preferred alternative.

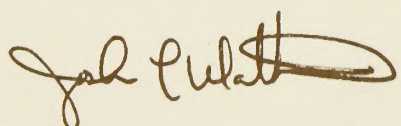
The Andrews MFP will guide the resource programs on approximately 1.6 million acres of public land in the Burns District for the next decade. This plan consists of:

- Final District Manager land use decisions for actions that are not significant elements of the grazing or wilderness EISs. These decisions will be implemented within 30 days of the release of this document.
- District Manager's wilderness area recommendations to the Oregon State Director. These recommendations, along with other information, will be considered when a proposed action is selected for the statewide wilderness EIS, scheduled for completion in 1984.
- Proposed action to be analyzed in the Andrews grazing EIS.

The draft EIS on grazing management will be distributed to the public this fall. There will be a 60-day public review period and informal meetings in Denio and Burns to provide opportunities to obtain public clarification of the draft EIS.

We appreciate your involvement and assistance in the planning effort, and we look forward to continued public assistance as we complete this process. Anyone interested in the details of the planning effort is invited to visit the BLM District Office in Burns, where all of the maps, overlays and various documents can be examined.



Andrews Resource Area Manager

District Manager

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Public Comment - February 19 - March 24

The land use planning process has generated considerable public interest and comments on the Andrews Proposed Land Use Alternatives. Three public meetings were held with 137 individuals attending who provided over eight hours of taped comments. There were an additional 255 written comments received during the comment period. Comments represented quite a spectrum. There were 116 local comments, 92 from Oregon, 32 out-of-State and 15 of unknown origin. The following provides a brief overview of those comments:

A. Degree of Interest Shown in Factors or Criteria

1. Wilderness	High
2. Range	
3. Wildlife & Fish	
4. Wild Horses	
5. Mineral/Energy	
6. Soils	to
7. Cultural	
8. Recreation & Visual	
9. Special Designation Areas	
10. Water Quality	
11. Socio-Economics	
12. Off-Road Vehicles	
13. Consistency	Low

B. Alternative Preference

- A - 74
- B - 16
- C - 25
- D - 44
- E - 15 (other or combination of above alternatives)

C. Issues and Public Response

1. Range

The following is taken from specific written comments received from the public:

Should the Steens Summit be grazed?

- Allow grazing - 2
- Restrict grazing - 31

Should grazing be allowed in riparian areas?

- Allow grazing - 7
- Limited use allowed - 3
- Restrict use - 46

Should native species be used instead of introduced species?

- Continue to use crested wheatgrass - 1
- Limit the use of introduced species - 1
- Use native species - 17

Should sheep grazing be allowed?

- Sheep are compatible and should be allowed - 4
- Sheep are compatible and limited use allowed - 5
- Sheep are not compatible and should not be allowed - 9

Should vegetation conversion be allowed

- Improve vegetation through management - 23
- Allow conversions but modified - 5

2. Wilderness

How should wilderness be addressed?

- All areas as wilderness - 26
- No areas as wilderness - 40
- Selected areas as wilderness - 13

3. Wild Horses

How should wild horses be managed?

- Allowed to increase - 4
- Restricted to existing numbers - 8
- Restricted at minimum numbers - 41

4. Special Designation Areas

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)

- Adopt all ACECs - 8
- Adopt no ACECs - 0
- Adopt portion of ACECs - 1

Research Natural Areas (RNAs)

- Adopt all RNAs - 21
- Adopt no RNAs - 0
- Adopt portion of RNAs - 5

Alvord Desert

- Restrict use - 12
- Allow use as is - 2

Lily Lake

- Fence lake and remove grazing - 20
- Manage without fence - 3

5. Socioeconomic Concerns

The following items were listed to consider in the decision-making process:

- Consider the impacts on the local economy - 4
- Evaluate the benefit/cost relationship in all range work - 14
- Consider returns from grazing - 4
- Consider the social impacts - 1

6. Off-Road Vehicles (ORV)

- Allow ORV use as it is - 4
- Restrict ORV use - 29

7. Lands

- Use existing utility corridor - 4
- Allow access to private lands - 6
- Should the Steens Loop Road remain open

- Close the Loop Road - 3
- Leave the Loop Road open - 4

An additional 26 comments were received after the close of the public comment period. These late comments were considered in the development of the preferred alternative, but were not included in this summary analysis. The original comments will be made available at the district for those that might be interested.

A summary of individual comments is shown in Table 1. Comments received were quite varied, but certain issues were very clear. The preferred alternative was developed by considering public opinion along with resource capability, social and economic consequences, and environmental and political considerations.

TABLE 1. PUBLIC OPINION ON MAJOR ISSUES

Factors	Local or Non-local	Total Comments	IN FAVOR							AGAINST		
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
WILDERNESS	local	68	6				1			2		59
	non-local	58	35	6	3	1	6	1	2	1	1	2
RANGE	local	74	66	3	2		2	1				
	non-local	45	7	4	2		7	2	1			22
WILDLIFE and FISH	local	42	13	9	10	4	6					
	non-local	30	8	13	7	1	1					
WILD HORSES	local	35				2	12	1	1		5	12
	non-local	37	4	1	1		6	4		2		17
MINERALS/ENERGY	local	30	1	12	2	13		1			1	
	non-local	20	2	1	1	1	2	2	3	1		7
SOILS	local	27		9	8	4	3	2				
	non-local	19	3	1	7	3	3	1	1			
CULTURAL and BOTANICAL	local	13		3	2				3	4		1
	non-local	32	6	6	7	8	1		1		1	2
RECREATION/VISUAL	local	24	4	4	5	2	3	1	4	1		
	non-local	18	4		3	3	4				2	2
SPECIAL MGMT. AREAS	local	7	3			1		1				2
	non-local	32	26	2	1	3						
WATER QUALITY	local	18	1	3	4	4	4	2				
	non-local	18	7	5		4	1	1				
EMPHASIZE EFFECTS ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELL BEING	local	18	8	1	3			5	1			
	non-local	5	1	1				2	1			
OFF-ROAD VEHICLES	local	6	3	1		1						1
	non-local	17	2				2					7
CONSISTENCE WITH STATE AND LOCAL LAND USE PLANS	local	3			1	2						
	non-local	6		1					2	2		1



EIS Scoping Meetings

Public meetings for the purpose of scoping the Andrews EIS were combined with the meetings to discuss the development of the preferred alternative for the Andrews Management Framework Plan (MFP). This combination of meetings was held in Denio, Nevada March 8, 1982; Burns, Oregon March 9, 1982; and Portland, Oregon March 11, 1982. The MFP at that stage consisted of four land use allocation alternatives (A, B, C and D) which had been developed from criteria established with earlier public input.

Public comments related to scoping of the grazing EIS were made in writing as well as at the public meetings. (See the public comment summary of this document.)

The public comments were solicited on three potential EIS alternatives:

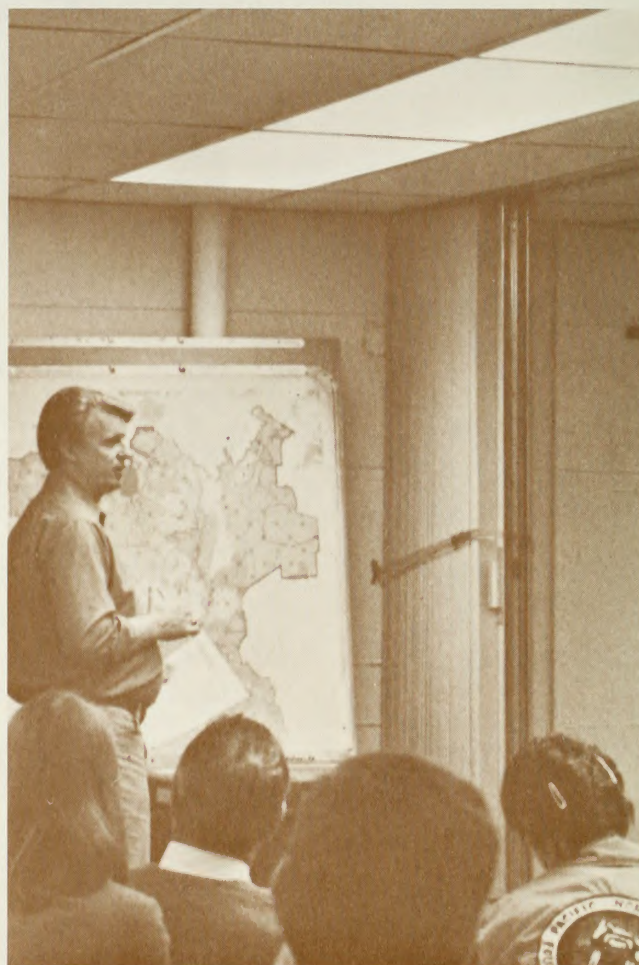
- The preferred alternative, which contains the livestock grazing-related elements of the proposed MFP. How public comment influenced the proposed MFP is discussed in the public comment summary of this document.
- An alternative that would emphasize livestock grazing. Persons interested in such an alternative expressed support for the grazing-related elements of MFP Alternative A.
- An alternative that would emphasize non-livestock values. Persons interested in such an alternative wanted it to exclude livestock grazing in riparian areas and other areas with special values. They also wanted it, unlike MFP Alternative D, to limit wild horse herd numbers based on existing Herd Management Plans. In

addition, they wanted the alternative to limit the construction of range improvements for the primary benefit of livestock.

Public comment at the meetings overwhelmingly opposed the analysis in the EIS of a "No Grazing" alternative that would prohibit livestock grazing throughout the EIS area.

After review of the comments it was concluded that the following alternatives should be analyzed in the EIS:

- The preferred alternative.
- Emphasize livestock grazing. (MFP Alternative A slightly modified.)
- Emphasize non-livestock values. (Lower levels of long term grazing use than the preferred alternative by: exclusion of livestock grazing from riparian areas and other areas with special values; limitation of brush management to only those areas needed to develop forage to satisfy existing livestock user preference.)
- No action. (Continue the existing level of livestock grazing.) This alternative is required by law.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PREFERRED LAND USE ALTERNATIVE OF THE ANDREWS MFP

Goal: Balance economic uses with protection of natural values.

Objectives:

1. Improve and maintain vegetation conditions to benefit livestock and wildlife. Maintain all existing AMPs. Develop and implement AMPs on remaining allotments including such improvements as seeding, brush control and manipulation, irrigation, fences, pipelines, spring and well development. Restrict livestock use in major perennial stream riparian zones. Allocate any surplus forage to livestock.
2. Keep public lands open for exploration, development or collection of mineral resources, rights-of-way, utility corridors and commodity, community or commercial uses.
3. Manage for diversity of wildlife habitat to provide for a variety of game and non-game wildlife species.
4. Maintain or enhance water quality along major streams in all basins. Protect sensitive areas and fragile soils.
5. Recommend wilderness designation of those study areas, or portions thereof, which are manageable and possess a variety of high quality wilderness values and other resource benefits. Implement or construct only acceptable range improvements in these areas.
6. Provide a variety of recreation opportunities including developed sites, dispersed recreation, off-road vehicles and limited access areas.
7. Provide for the protection and interpretation of high quality cultural, scientific and educational resources.
8. Maintain scenic quality in high value areas.
9. Manage wild horse populations within existing and proposed wild horse herd management plans and employ herd improvement practices to enhance factors such as color, conformation and breed.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - RANGE

Forage Allocations - Under the preferred alternative, forage allocations would be adjusted to accommodate other resource values as shown in Table 2. Forage would be allocated for wild horses and wildlife. Livestock would be excluded from 14,210 acres to protect certain riparian and special management areas. In other major riparian areas and special management areas, grazing would be managed to improve or maintain the condition of the area.

The preferred alternative would adjust active grazing use to conform with existing grazing capacity in the following allotments: Pueblo-Lone Mountain, Trout Creek Mountain and Andrews. No adjustments would be required on other allotments because current authorized (permitted) use is within grazing capacity. Ear tagging and trespass control programs would continue to help prevent unauthorized livestock use and keep stocking rates at carrying capacity.

Under the preferred alternative, preference would be shifted across allotment boundaries where excess forage exists. Some livestock use in Trout Creek Mountain and Andrews would be shifted to Tule Springs Allotment and new boundaries would be established. In addition, active use could also be transferred to Diamond Seedings in the Drewsey Resource Area on a temporary or permanent basis, if forage becomes available in the future.

Under the preferred alternative, forage production would be increased to meet existing and projected demand for livestock forage.

MANAGEMENT

Under the preferred alternative, 1,552,364 acres in 23 allotments would be intensively managed. An additional 21,031 acres, which includes small portions of 11 allotments, would be managed under custodial management due to their scattered distribution which makes intensive management impractical. Under custodial management, BLM activities would be limited to issuing grazing permits and periodic monitoring of range condition and trend. No significant expenditure of public range improvement funds would be invested on rangelands under custodial management, however, the range user may invest private funds to improve management and condition of these ranges.

RANGE IMPROVEMENTS

Proposed range improvements include: fences, water developments and pipelines, seedings, brush control and irrigation. The range improvements included in the preferred alternative would be cost-effective, according to a preliminary benefit-cost analysis on



an allotment basis. An allotment-specific benefit-cost analysis will be conducted in time for summary in the final grazing EIS and each project will be analyzed as to its economic feasibility prior to development. Some of the proposed range improvements arrayed in this summary and the draft Andrews grazing EIS may be dropped from consideration after completion of benefit cost analysis.

The preferred alternative level of range improvements is within potential funding levels for the planning period of 10 years. Funding sources may include federal, state, county and private contributed funds. After completion of the decision process the actual level of range improvements will also be limited by the availability of funds. Maintenance of most new range improvements as well as existing improvements will be the responsibility of the benefitting range users.

Fences - The proposed action provides for construction of all proposed fences that are cost-effective and are necessary to meet specific rangeland objectives. Fencing is necessary to establish pastures and grazing systems for intensive management. Fencing would also be used to exclude livestock from some special management areas and riparian zones.

Water Developments and Pipelines - The preferred alternative would allow construction of all cost-effective water developments and pipelines required to meet range management objectives. Proposed projects in wilderness study areas would be analyzed on a site specific basis. Those projects which enhance wilderness values, are not impairing and do not require mechanized vehicle use for continual maintenance are consistent with interim management for WSAs. Projects would be established if they meet these criteria.

Brush Management - Under the preferred alternative, brush control by herbicides or fire would be implemented on 72,731 acres. Brush control and seeding, using both native and introduced species, would be implemented on 78,520 acres. See Map 1. Land treatments would be permitted on crucial wildlife habitat only when they enhance the area for wildlife. Crucial wildlife habitat includes: riparian areas; deer fawning, summer and winter range; bighorn sheep range; 90% of the area within 2 miles of sage grouse strutting grounds and 1/2 mile within raptor nesting areas. No drilled seedings are proposed in recommended WSAs and special management areas. Drilled seedings will not be implemented in any WSA unless Congress decides to not designate the area as wilderness.

Under the preferred alternative, 2,500 acres of irrigated pasture would be developed as listed below.

Project Name	Acres	Increase in Production (AUMs)
Pueblo Valley	1,400	7,000
North Sandhills	900	2,800
South Sandhills	200	640

These irrigated pastures would provide 10,440 AUMs which would supply additional forage to help satisfy Class I qualifications for livestock grazing. Studies have shown that irrigated pastures would provide the most efficient and cost-effective method to help meet the demand for livestock forage. The development of the project would be a combined effort by BLM range users, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, Harney County Range Improvement Fund and possibly Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service. The pastures would be designed to maximize on-site wildlife benefits. Water rights would be filed for jointly by the parties involved. Maintenance and operation of the pastures and facilities would be the responsibility of the benefiting users.

Domestic Sheep Use - Under the preferred alternative, cattle use would be converted to sheep use upon request of authorized range users and when there are no significant conflicts with wildlife. Domestic sheep use would be prohibited on existing and proposed bighorn sheep ranges. On deer and antelope ranges, big game forage needs would be satisfied first.

Steens Summit Allotment - Under the preferred alternative, no livestock grazing would be licensed on Steens Summit Allotment in order to protect the sensitive resource values and to provide maximum non-consumptive uses of these resources.



TABLE 2. FORAGE AND LAND USE ALLOCATIONS

	Units	Preferred Alternative
CURRENT FORAGE DEMAND		
Livestock Active Use	AUMs ¹	102,988
Livestock Suspended Non-Use	AUMs	1,576
Wild Horse Forage (existing use)	AUMs	5,680 ²
Wildlife Forage (existing use)	AUMs	3,399
PROPOSED ALLOCATIONS OF EXISTING FORAGE PRODUCTION		
Livestock Forage	AUMs	91,687
Wild Horse Forage	AUMs	5,680
Wildlife Forage (competitive)	AUMs	3,399
Existing and Proposed Exclusions	AUMs	1,770
Total Forage Allocated (existing forage production)	AUMs	102,536
ADDITIONAL FORAGE NEEDED TO MEET CURRENT LIVESTOCK DEMAND	AUMs	12,877
POTENTIAL FORAGE PRODUCTION INCREASES AND ASSOCIATED LAND TREATMENTS		
Management	AUMs	25,527
Land Treatments:		
Brush Control (72,731 acres)	AUMs	5,529
Seedings (78,520 acres)	AUMs	14,192
Irrigated Pastures (2,500 acres)	AUMs	10,440
Total Potential Production Increase	AUMs	55,688
Proposed Fences	Miles	262
Riparian Zones to be Managed	Miles	113
Wild Horses:		
South Steens HMA	Numbers	150-300
Alvord-Tule Springs HMA	Numbers	80-140
Heath Creek-Sheepshead HMA	Numbers	50-100

¹ AUMs - Animal Unit Months - The amount of forage consumed by one mature cow and a calf (under six months) for one month.




² Forage allocations for horses have been established in the existing Herd Management Plans. These allocations represent the middle range of horse numbers provided for in the herd management areas.

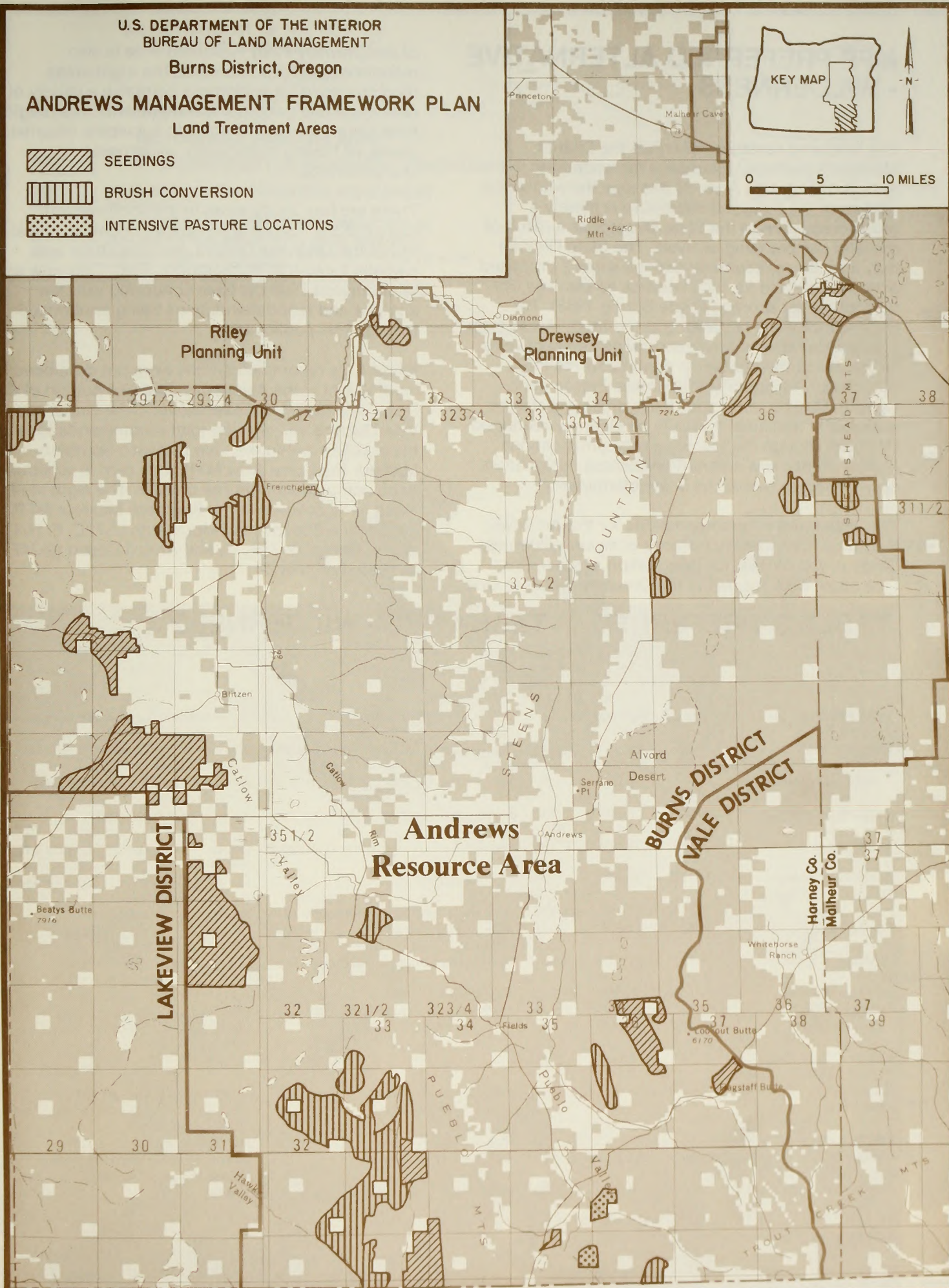
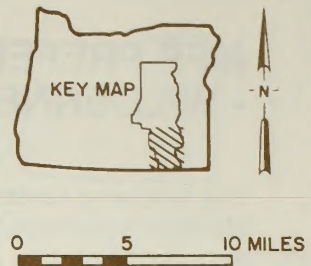
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Burns District, Oregon

ANDREWS MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN

Land Treatment Areas

-  SEEDINGS
-  BRUSH CONVERSION
-  INTENSIVE PASTURE LOCATIONS



MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

The following narrative describes the District Manager's preferred alternative for wilderness in the Andrews Resource Area. At this time the wilderness portion of the preferred alternative is merely a recommendation to the State Director as a result of the land use planning analysis. The State Director may alter these recommendations when a proposed action is selected for the statewide Wilderness EIS (scheduled for scoping in late Spring 1983). The State Director will be looking at the Study Areas from a statewide rather than a districtwide perspective as he considers their potential contribution to the diversity of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Mineral reports for these areas will also be available at that time. It should be clearly understood that even though the following recommendations discuss wilderness and non-wilderness designation, only Congress makes the final determination.

The wilderness recommendations for the Andrews Resource Area identify portions of seven Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) for designation as wilderness. One other WSA located in the Drewsey Planning Unit

of the Drewsey-Riley Resource Area is also recommended for wilderness. The eight areas recommended for wilderness comprise a variety of ecological and geographical representatives ranging from desert lowland foothills to subalpine mountain peaks, all having high quality wilderness characteristics.

There are four study areas in the southwestern corner of the district which are all or partially located within the Lakeview District, and one study area partially located in Winnemucca. Both Lakeview and Winnemucca Districts have concurred with the analysis and recommendations being announced through this publication.

Wilderness recommendations were not developed for eight WSAs in the Alvord-Sheepshead portion of the Resource Area (northeast corner). The Burns and Vale Districts will develop joint recommendations for those WSAs within the Vale District's Southern Malheur Resource Area MFP. This plan is scheduled to be completed in the Fall of 1982. The eight study areas to be covered in the Southern Malheur MFP include the Sheepshead Mountains (2-72C, F, H, I, J); Winter Range (2-73A, H) and Alvord Desert (2-74F) as shown on Map 2.

TABLE 3. PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

WSA Names	Nos.	WSA Acreage	Acreage Recom- mended for Wild- erness**	Other Recommendations	Rationale for Non-Wilderness
High Steens	2-85F	65,940	33,000	Remainder as ACEC & non-wilderness uses.	Adjust for manageability, conflicting uses & private lands.
Pueblo Mountains	2-81	68,030 ¹	51,000 [*]	Remainder for non-wilderness uses.	Adjust for conflicting uses and manageability.
Little Blitzen Gorge	2-86F	9,380	7,000	Remainder for non-wilderness uses, ACEC.	Adjust for manageability.
Blitzen River	2-86E	52,060	19,000	Remainder for non-wilderness uses.	Conflicts with other resource uses and private lands.
South Fork of the Donner und Blitzen	2-85G	35,850	-0-	Non-wilderness uses.	Conflicts with other resource uses and private lands.
Home Creek	2-85H	25,120	21,000	Remainder for non-wilderness uses.	Adjust for manageability.
Alvord Peak	2-83	14,655	-0-	ACEC 14,655 Acres for Bighorn Habitat.	Conflicts with other resource values.
Rincon	2-82	97,545 ²	19,000	Remainder for non-wilderness uses.	Conflicts with other resource values and manageability.
Hawksie Walksie	1-146A	68,360 ³	41,000 [†]	Remainder for non-wilderness uses.	Adjust for conflicting uses.
Mahogany Ridge	2-77	27,360	-0-	Non-wilderness uses.	Manageability (private land).
Stonehouse	2-23L	21,000 ⁴	-0-	Non-wilderness uses.	Manageability, conflicts with existing uses.
Malheur River-Blue-bucket Creek	2-14	5,560 ⁵	5,560	-----	-----
Bridge Creek	2-87	14,060	-0-	Non-wilderness uses.	Conflicts, few special features.
Lower Stonehouse	2-23M	8,090	-0-	Non-wilderness uses.	Manageability, conflicts with recreational uses.
Red Mountain	2-78	14,730	-0-	Non-wilderness uses.	Manageability.
Basque Hills	2-84	137,220	-0-	Non-wilderness uses.	Conflicts, with other resource values and manageability.
Hawksie Walksie	1-146B	8,520 ⁷	-0-	Non-wilderness uses.	Manageability.
TOTAL		673,490	196,560		
TOTAL (Andrews Area)		524,260	173,400		

¹ * 600 acres are located in the Winnemucca District, Nevada

² 2,330 acres are located in the Lakeview District

³ 44,260 acres are located in the Lakeview District

⁴ 12,000 acres are located in the Drewsey Planning Unit

⁵ All of this WSA is located in the Drewsey Planning Unit

⁶ 75,960 acres are located in the Lakeview District

⁷ All of this WSA is located in the Lakeview District

[†] 17,000 acres are located in the Lakeview District

**Estimated

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Burns District, Oregon

ANDREWS MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN

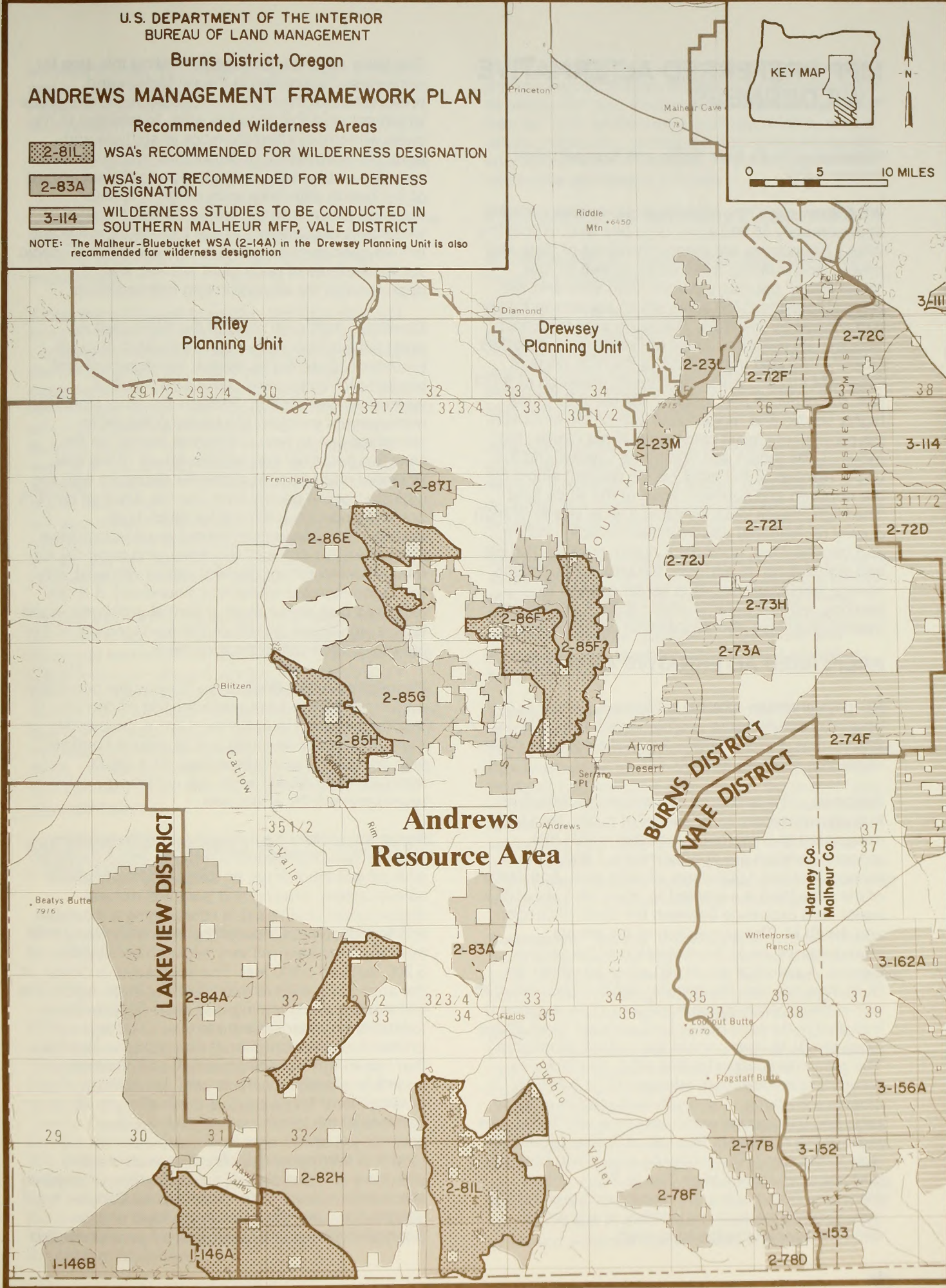
Recommended Wilderness Areas

2-81L WSA's RECOMMENDED FOR WILDERNESS DESIGNATION

2-83A WSA's NOT RECOMMENDED FOR WILDERNESS DESIGNATION

3-114 WILDERNESS STUDIES TO BE CONDUCTED IN SOUTHERN MALHEUR MFP, VALE DISTRICT

NOTE: The Malheur-Bluebucket WSA (2-14A) in the Drewsey Planning Unit is also recommended for wilderness designation



MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number: High Steens 2-85F

WSA Summary: This wilderness study area contains approximately 65,940 acres of public land. Within the WSA's boundaries are seven inholdings of state and private land totalling 3,040 acres as well as four "cherry-stem" boundary parcels (two state and two private) totalling 2,786 acres which are almost totally surrounded by the WSA. The study area is located less than 20 miles southeast of Frenchglen in Harney County. Included in this WSA is the high ridge of Steens Mountain, which reaches an elevation of 9,733 feet, the canyons and much of the foothills of the highly scenic and rugged east face of the mountain, the prominent glacial canyons of Kiger Gorge, Big Indian, Little Indian and Wildhorse Creeks, and the upper reaches of the more gentle western slope, on the northern and southern ends of the study area. The High Steens WSA contains a wide variety of high quality recreational opportunities including hiking and backpacking, horseback riding, hunting, fishing and sightseeing. In addition, the area also contains several significant resource values relating to geology, wildlife, botany, scenic quality, ecological interrelationships and educational opportunities.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Partial wilderness - major boundary adjustments - combine with the Little Blitzen Gorge WSA 2-86F - designate portions of the remaining acreage as an ACEC.

Rationale - The preferred alternative recommends that approximately 33,000 acres of public land be designated as wilderness. Included within this recommendation are approximately 1,980 acres of private land and 1,300 acres of state land. Acquisition of the state land is expected to occur as a result of a major land exchange between the State of Oregon and the BLM. The acquisition of the private inholdings will be at the discretion of the various owners. A parcel of about 180 acres on which the BLM does not own the mineral rights is also included within the recommended boundary. (This acreage is included in the total public land acreage given above since the BLM does control the surface ownership.) The recommendation for this WSA also includes combining the area with adjacent WSA 2-85F by closing a portion of the south loop road in order to form one contiguous wilderness area which contains most of the significant features of Steens Mountain (see Recreation). The following discussion however, pertains solely to the High Steens WSA, unless otherwise stated, since the recommendation for this area remains the same regardless of any future decision concerning the loop road.

The basic rationale for recommending this area for wilderness designation is the protection and preservation of the highly significant resource values which occur in this sensitive area. In addition to the basic wilderness characteristics of solitude and primitive recreational opportunities this study area provides a substantial contribution to the watershed of the region and has a wide range of quality resource features which would benefit from wilderness designation. These include sensitive and limited species of flora and fauna, exceptional scenic values, features of geological interest, and opportunities for education and interpretation.

Conflicts - Although most of the significant or potential conflicts have been eliminated through boundary adjustments, several management and conflict problems could occur as a result of wilderness designation. Perhaps the most significant management problem will be the potential for recreation use to have a negative impact on the sensitive botanical and wildlife values of the area. Potential management problems also exist with the inclusion of the private land parcels. Another conflict could include the potential for oil and gas development (since recent lease applications have been made for much of this area), and potential for mineral development (several claims still exist with the recommended wilderness boundary). It is not expected that any of these potential problems would have a significant impact on the management of this area for wilderness in the long term.

Description of the Boundary - Substantial boundary adjustments have been made for this wilderness recommendation in order to improve the overall manageability of this area and to reduce conflicts with competing resource values. As a result approximately 33,000 acres are not being recommended for wilderness.

Along the eastern boundary most of the lower foothills were eliminated in order to avoid conflicts with private inholdings, an irregular private land status pattern, existing and potential mineral disturbances, and to aid in establishing a locatable and identifiable boundary. The boundary along this portion of the area will vary between an elevation of 5,200 feet and 5,800 feet. The southeastern corner of the area is adjusted to the 6,000 foot level. Again, this will avoid existing mining disturbances, provide a locatable boundary, eliminate over 1,000 acres of private subsurface (mineral) ownership in an area that has a high mineral potential, and eliminate a source of possible conflicts with geothermal development. This adjustment will also cut off portions of the lower foothills. The southern boundary is drawn on a legal subdivision at the mouth of Wildhorse Canyon. The southwestern boundary is located along a combination of physical features, the western rim of Wildhorse Canyon, legal subdivisions, and elevation lines. Most of this boundary will result in a minimal amount of deleted

acreage in order to provide an identifiable boundary and to avoid an irregular pattern of land status. However, this will eliminate a large portion of the southwestern corner of the study area containing a portion of the gentle western slope of the mountain. This area is eliminated for a number of management reasons including a private inholding, an irregular pattern of adjacent private land, a lack of identifiable boundaries, relatively easy and uncontrollable vehicle access, and the need, through vehicle oriented hunting, to control and manage wildlife (deer) populations.

Along the northwest boundary the loop road will remain as part of the boundary (assuming no combination of study areas) while the remainder of the northwestern boundary will be adjusted to conform with the main Steens Ridge and the western rim of Kiger Gorge. This will result in the elimination of a minor amount of acreage near the Steens Summit in order to provide continued access to several of the primary viewpoints of the mountain. In addition, it will eliminate an area in which vehicle use would be relatively difficult to control. This boundary will also result in the deletion of much of the northwestern corner of the WSA which has similar terrain and virtually the same management problems as does the southwestern corner.

Most of the northern boundary will follow a legal subdivision across Kiger Gorge and then will follow down the bottom of the Mann Creek drainage to the 5,800 foot level where it will join with the eastern boundary. Eliminated from the northern boundary is the northern extension of the east rim of Kiger Gorge and a small block of land north of Mann Creek. Both of these parcels extend away from the bulk of the WSA, are surrounded on three sides by private land, and can only be partially defined by identifiable physical features.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number - Pueblo Mountains 2-81

WSA Summary - The Pueblo Mountain WSA contains 68,030 acres of public land. Included within the study area's boundary are 960 acres of private and 1,920 acres of state land inholdings and two "cherry-stem" boundary parcels of private land totalling 640 acres. The area is located about five miles south of Fields and one mile north of Denio in Harney County although a small portion (600 acres) crosses the state line into Humboldt County, Nevada. The study area includes the lower foothills and the main ridge of the Pueblo Mountain on the west, the high meadows and valleys in the central portion of the area, and Pueblo Peak and the major drainages of Cottonwood, Colony, and Van Horn Creeks near the eastern boundary.

The Pueblo Mountain area contains high quality primitive recreation opportunities for activities such as hiking, hunting, camping, and sightseeing. Other features such as the area's geology, wildlife, scenic values, vegetation, ecological interrelationships and educational values substantially contribute to the wilderness qualities of the area.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Partial wilderness - moderate boundary adjustments.

Rationale - The preferred alternative recommends that approximately 51,000 acres of public land be recommended for designation as wilderness. Also included within the recommended wilderness boundary are approximately 3,700 acres of private land and about 3,200 acres of state land.

Acquisition of the private land incorporated into the proposed boundary will be at the owner's discretion, while it is expected that the state land will be acquired as a result of a major land exchange between the BLM and the State of Oregon.

The primary rationale for recommending this area for wilderness designation is the protection of a variety of human and resource oriented benefits. These include opportunities for solitude and recreation, watershed, wildlife, geological, ecological, and educational values which have all been identified within this WSA.

Conflicts - The primary potential conflict with wilderness which remains in spite of the boundary adjustments, is the potential for mineral development. Past exploration and removal of the area's mineral resource has occurred primarily on the eastern side of the WSA. Although the evidence of much of this activity has been deleted from the recommended wilderness boundary, the potential for additional mineralization within the recommended boundary is high. Other resource values which could conflict with wilderness include geothermal, oil and gas.

Boundaries - Several boundary adjustments have been recommended with the preferred alternative. Most of these adjustments have been made to resolve conflicts with existing resource uses (mining) or proposed developments (range). Some of the alterations have been recommended in order to enhance the manageability of the area as a whole. Only slight adjustments have been made to the Pueblo Mountain's eastern boundary. These include changing the eastern boundary north of Arizona Creek to conform to the 4,300 foot elevation level to avoid potential management problems with off-road vehicle use along the lower more accessible slopes and a proposed recreation site at Cottonwood Creek, moving the boundary to the 6,800 foot level south of Arizona Creek in order to eliminate existing mining scars and potential conflicts with mineral

development, and identifying the southeastern boundary at the 4,400 foot level to provide a locatable boundary and to avoid manageability problems with adjacent private lands.

On the southeastern corner of the WSA the boundary was moved to the drainage north of Denio Creek. This was done in order to avoid existing mineral developments and potential conflicts which occur along Denio Creek.

There has been no change proposed for the southern boundary. The area recommended for wilderness follows a road dipping into Nevada for approximately 600 acres and then follows a bladed fence line to the west.

On the western side of the area the boundary has been adjusted to the 5,200 foot elevation level for the entire length of the WSA to the Domingo Pass road on the north. This change has been made to eliminate the lower foothills in order to reduce conflicts with proposed range improvements and to reduce conflict and manageability problems because much of the area is accessible to motorized vehicles.

The northern boundary will be altered in the central and northeastern portions while the northwestern boundary will remain the Domingo Pass road over the main Pueblo ridge. In the northcentral portion of the area the boundary will be established along the road which runs south from the Domingo Pass road until it intersects with Willow Creek. This adjustment results in the inclusion of additional private and state land within the recommended boundary for the primary purpose of establishing a more identifiable and manageable boundary.

The northeastern boundary will run from the point of intersection of the above road with Willow Creek through the bottom of the Willow Creek drainage until it intersects with the Fields-Denio road. This adjustment will eliminate several sections of the WSA which lie to the north of Willow Creek. These sections contain a number of old mining scars resulting from prospects and access routes and will also eliminate a portion of the WSA suspected of being highly mineralized.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number: Little Blitzen Gorge 2-86F

WSA Summary: The Little Blitzen Gorge WSA contains 9,380 acres of public land with no private or state inholding. It is located on the western side of the Steens Mountain Ridge about 14 miles southeast of Frenchglen in Harney County. The study area consists of the Little Blitzen Gorge from the headwaters near the Steens Ridge on the east, to a

boundary with private land near the mouth of the gorge on the west. The U-shaped glaciated gorge is up to a mile wide, ranges from 800 to 1200 feet in depth, and is approximately eight miles in length. The recreational opportunities available within the study area include fishing, hunting, sightseeing, and hiking. Other high quality features present within this area include geological, botanical, and scenic values.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Partial wilderness - moderate boundary modifications - combine with the High Steens WSA 2-85F - designate a portion of the remainder as an ACEC.

Rationale - The preferred alternative recommends that approximately 7,000 acres be designated as wilderness. The area recommended for wilderness includes about 100 acres of private and 20 acres of state land which are currently part of the WSA's northern and southern boundary. The acquisition of the private land may or may not occur at the discretion of the owner. It is expected that the state land will be acquired as a result of a major exchange between the State of Oregon and the BLM. Also included within the boundary for 2-86F is approximately 140 acres of land on which the mineral ownership is not controlled by the BLM (this figure is included in the total public land acreage given above). Under the preferred alternative, this WSA would be combined with the High Steens WSA (2-85F) through the closure of a portion of the south loop road, in order to form one contiguous wilderness area (see Recreation). This discussion however, will primarily focus on this WSA since the recommendation for wilderness remains the same regardless of any future decision concerning the loop road.

The primary rationale for the designation of this area as wilderness is the preservation of high quality recreational, botanical, geological, and scenic resources as well as the protection of the headwaters of a valuable watershed area.

Conflicts - Several conflicts and manageability problems could arise with wilderness designation. The most important manageability problem is likely to occur from heavy recreational use of the canyon bottom which contains a large number of sensitive plant species. Problems with vehicle use and control on the upper elevations should be significantly reduced with recommended boundary adjustments but could be a minor manageability concern and a potential conflict with wilderness. It is possible that minor manageability problems could occur as a result of the inclusion of private land within the proposed boundary. A conflict could arise as a result of the private ownership of the minerals rights in the 140 acre parcel along the southern boundary. Finally, a potential conflict with wilderness could occur with oil and gas development in view of the recent lease

applications which cover most of this WSA. None of these potential conflicts are expected to be significant or uncontrollable, nor would they preclude the overall management of this area as wilderness in the long term.

Description of the Boundary - Moderate boundary adjustments have been made for the wilderness recommendation of this area. These adjustments occur primarily along the northern and eastern boundaries. For ease of management, both for boundary identification and to reduce the need for vehicle control in gentle, accessible terrain, the northern and eastern boundaries will be adjusted to conform with top of the rim surrounding the gorge. This will result in the addition of some private land (mentioned above) which extends down the northern slope of the canyon as well as the elimination of approximately 2,000 acres of relatively flat terrain which lies adjacent to most of the gorge. The remainder of the boundary (assuming no combination with the adjacent study area) will continue to be the south loop road (with a slight adjustment for the acquisition of state land) and the private land on the west.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number: Blitzen River 2-86E

WSA Summary: Blitzen River is a 52,060 acre study area. Within its boundaries it contains inholdings of 680 acres (private land) and 520 acres (state land) as well as "cherrystem" inholdings totalling 1,840 acres involving both private and state lands. The study area is located less than one mile south of Frenchglen in Harney County. The WSA's basic topography can be described as a rolling, sloping desert plateau. The area contains a variety of topographic features including the dominant features of the Donner und Blitzen River Canyon and Fish Creek Canyon both averaging 300 to 400 feet in depth, the sloping foothills of the Steens Mountain ridge which occur east of the river and the dissected rock-rimmed ridges which occur on the west side of the river. The area offers high quality recreational opportunities for hiking and backpacking, horseback riding, hunting, fishing and sightseeing. In addition the WSA contains other resource benefits of a wild horse herd concentration area and very high scenic values associated with the Blitzen River and Fish Creek.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Partial-wilderness - substantial boundary adjustments.

Rationale - The preferred alternative recommends that approximately 19,000 acres be recommended for

designation as wilderness. This includes approximately 12 miles of the Donner and Blitzen River from Page Springs south until the river intersects private land, and Fish Creek from its confluence with the Blitzen to a point approximately three miles upstream where it too intersects with private land. The recommendation also includes an area of fairly dense juniper cover in the northeastern corner of the WSA. The proposed boundaries include no private lands and about 1120 acres of state owned land. The acquisition of the state land is expected to occur as a result of a major land exchange between the BLM and the State of Oregon. This WSA possesses high wilderness recreation values which are primarily associated with the Blitzen River corridor. Other multiple use values such as watershed, wildlife, and scenic resources are also closely tied to the river. The lack of private lands and other management problems makes wilderness designation the most appropriate use of the lands within the recommended boundary. It is felt that the lands outside the proposed wilderness boundary are better suited for other uses based upon conflicts, manageability, and non-wilderness values.

Conflicts - Only two relatively minor conflicts with proposed wilderness designation have been identified. These include oil and gas development potential (most of this area has been recently covered with lease applications) and the potential for increased recreation use to impair the wilderness and other multiple use values identified for protection. These problems are not severe and would not preclude long term management as wilderness.

Boundaries - Boundary adjustments have been made on this WSA for a variety of reasons. Conflicts and management problems with existing land uses and potential management problems related to adjacent private lands are the primary factors precluding wilderness designation of the remainder of the WSA. The northern boundary will follow the existing WSA boundary of the North Steens Loop Road to the east where it intersects with private land. The boundary will then proceed south along the private land and then west along a legal subdivision avoiding two parcels of private land and crossing the upper portions of Fish Creek Canyon twice as it winds through private and BLM land.

The eastern boundary south of Fish Creek has been defined along existing ways, roads, and legal subdivisions. These boundary adjustments have been made in order to avoid the potential manageability problems with two cherrystem boundary parcels of private land and to provide a more identifiable boundary.

The western boundary beginning in Section 32 of T. 32 S., R. 32 1/2 E., is located along the 5,200 foot elevation level. This line begins as the top of a ridge west of the river in Section 32 and eventually becomes the western rim of the Blitzen River Canyon

along the southernmost three miles of the area. The acreage to the west was eliminated due to the accessibility of this area by vehicles and the need to provide limited vehicle access to this portion of the river.

The northern portion of the western boundary has been identified along a road which parallels the river for approximately three and 1/2 miles. This road also provides fishing and hunting access to this portion of the Blitzen River area. The land to the west of the road is recommended for non-wilderness because of a substantial number of existing range developments and vehicle ways, and because the continuation of the range program in this area as permitted under wilderness management would lead to conflicts and manageability problems with access and maintenance needs.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number: South Fork of the Donner und Blitzen River 2-85G

WSA Summary: This 35,850 acre study area is located 12 miles southeast of Frenchglen in Harney County. Also included within the boundary is 1,320 acres of private land and 1,280 acres of state land. The WSA primarily includes the lower western slopes and the table land of the western portion of the Steens Mountain fault block. The predominate feature of the area is a major portion of the South Fork of the Blitzen River above Indian Creek and the Blitzen Crossing Campground. The study area is recognized as having a variety of high quality recreation opportunities (such as hiking, camping, hunting, and fishing) but has only one other multiple use value (wild horses) which enhances its wilderness character.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Non-wilderness

Rationale - The wilderness values of this WSA, aside from the opportunities for solitude, are very closely tied to the river corridor of the South Fork. Not only does the corridor have high recreational values, but it also possesses other multiple use resources in the form of watershed riparian and fisheries values. However, because of the presence of private land which cuts into the corridor in two areas, and the potential manageability problems associated with these lands (the river is expected to be the high recreational use area of the WSA) this area is not recommended for wilderness designation. In addition, manageability is also a problem along much of the eastern boundary due to an irregular pattern of private land.

Other manageability and conflict problems associated with the WSA center on the existing recreational use which occurs in the area. Hunting and fishing activities (especially hunting) are primarily oriented toward vehicle use for access. With wilderness designation the use of the vehicle ways within the area's boundaries for these activities would cease causing potential wildlife management problems regarding the population control of the deer herd.

Other possible conflicts with wilderness include a minor conflict with proposed range improvements (fencing) and a potential conflict with oil and gas development.

It is primarily due to the manageability problems associated with the private land along the river corridor, the high value of this area for deer hunting and the potential for adverse impacts of wilderness designation on the deer herd that the non-wilderness designation is determined to be the most appropriate use of this area. The other multiple use resource values can and will be protected through other management methods.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number: Home Creek 2-85H

WSA Summary: The study area is located about 13 miles south of Frenchglen in Harney County. Within the WSA's boundary are 25,120 acres of public land, 80 acres of private land, and 640 acres of state land. The study area consists of the extreme western edge of the Steens Mountain fault block and includes an eight mile portion of the Catlow Rim and several prominent drainages which cut through the western side of the mountain. Home Creek Canyon is the most spectacular of these drainages. Much of the area east of the rim and between the drainages is very gently rolling terrain. The WSA contains several high quality recreation opportunities, including hiking, hunting, and sightseeing, as well as several other resource characteristics which enhance the area's wilderness values. These characteristics include geological formations, the presence of a concentration of wild horses, and a valuable wildlife area which contains a high concentration of raptors.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Partial wilderness - minor boundary modifications.

Rationale - The preferred alternative recommends that approximately 21,000 acres of public land be designated as wilderness. Also included within this recommendation are the state and private inholdings

identified above (640 and 80 acres respectively). In addition, the recommended boundary includes a very small amount of private (less than 100 acres) and state land (less than 400 acres) along the western boundary where these non-public land corners overlap the proposed boundary. (Acquisition of the state land is expected to occur as a result of major exchange of land between the district and the State of Oregon. Acquisition of private land may or may not occur at the owner's discretion.)

The recommendation for this area as wilderness recognizes the high quality and sensitive nature of the area's biological resources, as well as the scenic, geological, and recreational values which are present.

Conflicts - There are several potential conflicts which could arise as a result of wilderness designation. These include: the potential for oil and gas development (recent applications now cover almost the entire area), the possibility for minor manageability problems as a result of the inclusion of two 40 acre parcels of private land, potential manageability problems concerning vehicle control along the northeastern boundary, especially as it involves the existing predominance of motorized recreational hunting, and the potential for wilderness recreation use to conflict with the wild horse population and the sensitive wildlife resource. The possible conflicts and manageability problems associated with wilderness designation are expected to be relatively minor and should not preclude the overall management of this area as wilderness in the long term.

Description of the Boundary - The preferred alternative recommends retention of the area's basic configuration. The western boundary will be modified slightly with an adjustment to locate the entire boundary at the 4700 foot level (along the toe of Catlow Rim). This adjustment was made to enhance the manageability of the area by avoiding the irregular land status configuration on this side of the WSA and by improving the on-the-ground identification of the boundary. The road and small parcels of private land on the northern and eastern boundary will remain the same. The southeastern boundary will be modified to exclude a small portion of the area which lies to the east of what is referred to as the Lower Crossing Road. Identified as a way in the inventory this route provides access to surrounding public and private lands and will become part of the boundary for that reason. In addition, the small amount of the WSA which will be excluded from the wilderness proposal as a result of this adjustment has not been identified as possessing high value wilderness characteristics. A legal subdivision boundary for the remainder of the southern boundary will result in the elimination of a very small amount of acreage which, because of adjacent land status, would not possess an identifiable boundary and would be difficult to manage.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number: Alvord Peak 2-83

WSA Summary: The Alvord Peak wilderness study area is located four miles north of Fields in Harney County. The study area contains 14,655 acres of public land with non-federal inholdings of 640 acres (80 acres private and 560 State). The study area contains the high peaks of the south end of the Steens Mountain ridgeline and their foothills. This area possesses several high quality recreation opportunities including hiking, hunting, and sightseeing. In addition the area also has other resource qualities such as geological formations, wild horse concentration, and a resident population of bighorn sheep which add to its wilderness characteristics.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Non-wilderness - designate entire area as an ACEC.

Rationale - This area is of significant interest because of its value as a range for bighorn sheep. Because of this factor and because the area has no natural boundary control which would limit access and visitor use, it is felt that increased visitor use as a result of wilderness designation would have a significant impact on the bighorn sheep. However, it is also felt that the area does possess resource values that deserve recognition and protection and therefore should be placed under ACEC status.

In addition to the potential wildlife/recreation conflict other possible conflicting resource values are also present within this WSA. These include: geothermal development (there are several existing leases along the eastern boundary), oil and gas potential (recent oil and gas applications have been made for the entire area), minerals (the WSA contains evidence of previous mining activity and new claims have been staked in the southern portion of the area), and range improvement potential (developments which are not compatible with wilderness management). The ACEC designation would protect the primary value of the area, but would also allow controlled development of resources which would conflict with wilderness designation.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number: Rincon 2-82

WSA Summary - The Rincon study area contains approximately 97,545 acres of public land. Also included within the study area are 120 acres of private land and 3,840 acres of state land. The WSA lies to the west of the Pueblo Mountains about six miles west of Fields in Harney County. The prominent topographic features of the area include the southern end of the Catlow Rim on the west, Lone Mountain on the southwest, and Oregon End Table on the east. Between these features most of the area's terrain is characterized by gently rolling foothills and flat lands. The high quality recreational opportunities offered by this WSA include hiking, hunting, and sightseeing. The area also contains an additional high value resource, that being a prominent raptor nesting area along the Catlow Rim.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Partial wilderness - substantial boundary adjustments.

Rationale - A ten mile long portion of the northwestern corner of the WSA is being recommended for wilderness in the preferred alternative. The recommended area runs parallel to and includes most of the southern portion of the Catlow Rim covering about 19,000 acres of public land and about 1,500 acres of state land. It is anticipated that the acquisition of the state lands will be made through a major land exchange between the BLM and the State of Oregon. There are no private lands within the proposed boundary.

The area proposed for wilderness contains the high quality recreational values and the raptor habitat area as described above. Those portions of the WSA which are not recommended for wilderness were eliminated due to conflicts with existing resource uses, proposed developments, and manageability problems.

Conflicts - The only conflicts identified with the proposed wilderness recommendation include the potential for oil and gas development, and the potential for recreational use to impact the raptor nesting areas.

Boundaries - The boundary adjustments made for this proposal occur along the eastern and southern sides of the area. The eastern boundary has been altered on the north to conform with legal subdivisions and an existing way. This adjustment was made to eliminate a number of existing range developments (reservoirs, vehicle ways, and a road)

which could cause conflict and manageability problems with respect to access and maintenance needs. A portion of the existing boundary from Mahogany Point south to the bottom of Section 36, T. 38 S., R. 32 E., will remain intact as it conforms to a section of road between these points. The remainder of the eastern boundary and the southern boundary will be a combination of legal subdivisions, an elevation boundary, and a physical feature (a drainage through the southern portion of Catlow Rim).

The western and northern boundaries will remain the same as they were established during the inventory. These include the Funnel Canyon road on the west and private land and a portion of the Long Hollow road on the north.

The remainder of the WSA to the south and east of the proposed wilderness area includes Lone Mountain and Oregon End Table. These areas were excluded from the proposal for a variety of reasons. The Lone Mountain portion was excluded as a result of this portion of the WSA being identified as having a good potential for concealed precious and base metal deposits. The Lone Mountain area also contains 120 acres of private land in two separate inholdings which would cause manageability problems as a result of access needs. The area to the north and west of Lone Mountain (southeast of the recommended wilderness area), contains a number of existing range developments including reservoirs, ways, and cherrystem roads. Due to the need for access to these sites for administrative and maintenance purposes it is felt that this portion of the WSA should not be recommended as wilderness because of potential manageability problems and conflicts.

Most of the remainder of the WSA to the eastern boundary has been proposed and determined as being an economically suitable site for a seeding. In addition, sites for brush control are also proposed for this area. The wilderness qualities of this portion of the study area are relatively low; and the benefits to be gained from the range developments would outweigh the benefits of designating the area as wilderness.

It is because of these conflicting resources, values, and uses that it has been determined that wilderness designation, for those lands not recommended in the preferred alternative, would not be the most appropriate use of the land.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number: Hawksie Walksie 1-146 A

WSA Summary: The study area is located approximately 40 miles east of Adel, Oregon in

Harney County. The entire study area contains 68,360 acres of public land including two sections (1,280 acres) of State land. Lone Juniper Mountain and Hawk Mountain (elevation 7,234 feet) are on the north. The mountains slope downward on the south to the dry Hawksie-Walksie lakebed (approximately 5,000 foot elevation). Topography varies from flat lake bed to gently rolling sagebrush lands on the west, to higher peaks and some steep rugged topography on the north and east parts of the unit.

The unit contains ten different vegetative communities with excellent stands of native range grasses in the east. There are excellent opportunities for hiking, backpacking and nature study with solitude. A proposed research natural area is representative of the high natural values present. The unit also contains interesting geologic formations, wildlife and wild horses.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation: Partial Wilderness - major boundary revision.

Rationale: The preferred alternative recommends that 40,760 acres of public land be designated as wilderness, and 27,600 acres as non-suitable. The two state inholdings are in the suitable area. These tracts are currently under consideration for exchange with the State of Oregon.

The suitable recommendation recognizes the high quality of the natural values in the east portion of the unit, the significance of the biological resource, and recreation values. The unit is contiguous to an administratively endorsed wilderness proposal on the Charles Sheldon National Antelope Range to the south. This unit, along with the Sheldon, would add to the diversity of the natural systems included in the wilderness system.

The western portion of the unit is considered non-suitable due to conflicts with identified wildlife and range development proposals. A majority of the Hawksie-Walksie lakebed is excluded to avoid conflict between range management and potential management problems resulting from topographically unrestricted vehicle access. The recommended boundary in this part of the unit uses legal description (rectangular survey lines) as close as possible to the topographic boundary along the edge of the lakebed.

Conflicts: Boundary revision was made to eliminate management conflicts. Minor potential for conflict with some range management practices remains, however, the Bureau management guidelines for wilderness allow latitude in resolving these issues.

Oil and gas lease applications have been filed on all lands in the unit.

A proposed wildlife project in the east portion of the unit will be addressed in the wilderness EIS for the unit. This involves vegetative manipulation on the Lakeview District.

Description of the Boundary: The preferred alternative retains the northeast boundary at private lands, the Hawk Valley Seeding fence line and the Long Draw Road. The south boundary remains the Charles Sheldon-Nevada State line boundary. The west boundary is modified to follow a vehicle way from T. 40 S., R. 30 E., Sec. 15 southward to Sec. 31, T. 40 S., R. 31 E. From this point, the boundary follows legal descriptions south to a vehicle way in T. 41 S., R. 31 E., Sec. 17 NE where it again takes up on a vehicle way traversing to the southeast and ending at the Nevada State line in Section 21.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number:
Mahogany Ridge 2-77

WSA Summary - The Mahogany Ridge study area includes 27,370 acres of public land located about 12 miles southeast of Fields in Harney County near the Oregon-Nevada border. The WSA consists of high, flat-topped, tableland which has been deeply cut by three perennial streams, in the north central portion of the Trout Creek Mountains. The WSA contains high value recreational opportunities for hiking, camping, hunting, and sightseeing as well as supplemental botanical features. The area has a significant amount of private land (20 inholdings totalling approximately 1,520 acres) scattered within its boundaries. In addition, most of these private inholdings are located along the stream corridors which are expected to be the primary recreational use corridors.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Non-wilderness.

Rationale - Although this WSA has a variety of high quality recreational opportunities the manageability of the area for wilderness protection and use is the major drawback to its designation. Because of the amount of private land and, most importantly, because of the location of those inholdings within the major drainages and expected recreational use corridors, the management of this area would be a significant problem. In addition, the configuration of the WSA with respect to adjacent private land on the north and west are also expected to cause problems

with the manageability of the area for wilderness. Few conflicts have been identified for this WSA with the exception of recent oil and gas lease applications. Because of the inherent manageability problems of this area it is not felt that wilderness designation would be the most appropriate use of the land.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number:
Stonehouse 2-23L

WSA Summary - The Stonehouse area is located about 50 miles southeast of Burns in Harney County. The WSA includes 21,000 acres of public land along with 920 acres of private and 320 acres of state land inholdings. The study area is situated on the northern extension of the Steens Mountain ridgeline and contains a steep east facing escarpment and high meadows on the west side of the area. The area has wilderness qualities including recreational opportunities for hiking, camping, hunting, and sightseeing, as well as special scenic quality values. The opportunities for solitude are enhanced in this area by a relatively high concentration of juniper.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Non-wilderness.

Rationale - This WSA is not being recommended for wilderness because of manageability problems and conflicts with existing uses. The manageability problems include a substantial boundary with adjacent private land and the lack of a clearly identifiable or locatable boundary on the western side where the flat to gently rolling terrain is readily accessible to cross country vehicular use. The conflicts with existing use are primarily related to vehicle oriented hunting on existing ways which again are concentrated on the western side of the WSA. Another potential conflict with wilderness could occur as a result of the recent interest in oil and gas exploration. Most of this area is covered with post-FLPMA oil and gas lease applications. It is felt that the relative value of the existing use and the manageability problems associated with the area outweigh the values to be gained from the designation of this area as wilderness. Therefore it is determined that the most appropriate use of this area is for non-wilderness oriented activities.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number - Malheur River-Bluebucket Creek 2-14

WSA Summary - This relatively small study area contains 5,560 acres of public land with no state or

private inholdings. The WSA is located in the Drewsey Planning Unit of the Drewsey-Riley Resource Area near the Malheur National Forest about 35 miles northeast of Burns. The area consists of three relatively flat-topped plateaus which are separated by the perennial streams which give the study area its name. The WSA offers quality recreational opportunities for hiking, camping, fishing, and sightseeing, but has no known special features which add to the area's wilderness quality.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Wilderness - no boundary adjustment.

Rationale - Although this WSA has no known special features which add to its wilderness quality, the area does possess several outstanding recreational activities which are of high wilderness value. In addition, wilderness would be consistent with the current MFP management prescription for this area, to manage for primitive recreation.

Conflicts - It is not expected that the conflicts and manageability problems which could arise as a result of wilderness designation would be sufficient to preclude the management of this area as wilderness in the long term. One of the most significant potential manageability problems is due to the fact that most of this WSA is surrounded by private land. The management problems which are normally associated with private land boundaries should be reduced in this area due to fencing and the orientation of the WSA to the topography (much of the study area lies on a readily identifiable plateau above most of the private land). Another potential conflict and/or management problem could arise as a result of private development on adjacent land. Interest has been expressed in the establishment of a commercial hunting lodge and in the development of a power generating facility on the Malheur River below the WSA. Both of these developments could have a negative impact on the wilderness characteristics of the area.

Boundaries - No boundary adjustments have been made. The study area is almost entirely surrounded by private lands. A small amount of U.S. Forest Service land on the north and a road along part of the eastern boundaries are the only exceptions.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number: Bridge Creek 2-87

WSA Summary - This WSA contains 14,060 acres of private land. A small amount of both private (40 acres) and state (480 acres) lands are included within the area's boundary. The study area is located about

five miles east of Frenchglen in Harney County on the northwestern slope of the Steens Mountain fault block. The gently rolling terrain of the majority of this area is deeply cut by two major drainages, Bridge and Mud Creeks. The WSA offers quality recreational opportunities for several activities such as hiking, camping, and sightseeing, but possesses no other special features which add to the area's wilderness values. Opportunities for solitude are enhanced in this area by the presence of juniper within the eastern half of the WSA.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Non-wilderness.

Rationale - Wilderness designation has not been identified as the most appropriate use of the lands within the Bridge Creek WSA. Although this WSA has fishing and riparian values it has not been recognized as having any other significant special features which warrant protection through wilderness designation. As with other WSAs this area is also covered with oil and gas lease applications which could result in future conflicts with wilderness. It is felt that even though the WSA does offer several "wilderness type" recreational opportunities that these alone are not sufficient to designate this area as wilderness and that the most appropriate use of this area is for other non-wilderness uses.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number: Lower Stonehouse 2-23M

WSA Summary - The 8,090 acres of this WSA are located just south of the Stonehouse study area (2-23L) about 60 miles southeast of Burns. The area contains one inholding of 160 acres. This study area is also located on the northern portion of the Steens Ridge and includes little more than the east facing escarpment and the top of the ridge. Opportunities for hiking, hunting, and sightseeing are the primary recreational values found in the area with special scenic quality values adding to the wilderness characteristics. The presence of juniper trees within this WSA moderately enhances the visitors opportunity for solitude.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Non-wilderness.

Rationale - The reasons for the non-wilderness recommendation on this WSA are manageability and conflicts. The manageability problems of this area result from a combination of factors all working against the area, including: the WSA's relatively small size, its orientation to the landscape (included within

its boundaries a very steep ridge and only a small amount of land on either side of the ridge), and the large amount of adjacent private land. In addition, most of the WSA lacks a clearly identifiable boundary, especially on the western side where the adjacent land is private. The conflicts which have also been identified as precluding wilderness designation include the potential rehabilitation of an existing seeding along the eastern boundary (permissible within interim or wilderness management), easy access to cross country vehicle use and existing vehicle oriented hunting on the western side of the area. Another potential conflict could occur as a result of oil and gas exploration. Most of this WSA has been covered with recent lease applications. It is felt that these conflicts and manageability problems outweigh the area's value as wilderness and therefore other land uses would be more appropriate.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number: Red Mountain 2-78

WSA Summary - This 14,730 acre WSA is located on the western edge of the Trout Creek Mountains about six miles northeast of Denio, Nevada in Harney County. It contains one prominent peak (Red Mountain), and several small intermittent drainages which cut through the area as they drain to the west. This study area offers significant opportunities for only two recreational activities (day hiking and sightseeing) and has no other high value special features which add to the wilderness qualities of the area.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Non-wilderness.

Rationale - Due to anticipated problems with the management of the area and the lack of significant features, this WSA is not being recommended for wilderness designation. The manageability problems arise from the fact that much of the western portion of the area is readily accessible by motor vehicles as its terrain is predominantly flat to gently rolling with few, if any, physical barriers. In addition, much of the southern boundary is adjacent to private land located at the bottom of a canyon. Identifying an acceptable boundary along this portion of the WSA would be relatively difficult, while failing to establish a boundary here would greatly increase the potential for management problem and conflicts between wilderness users and the adjacent landowner. The Red Mountain WSA also lacks a variety of recreational opportunities or special features. The wilderness values which are present within the WSA are also present within similar WSAs in the Andrews

Planning Area which are recommended for wilderness designation. Therefore, because their values are represented elsewhere, it would be more appropriate to recommend this area for non-wilderness.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number: Basque Hills 2-84

WSA Summary - This extremely large study area in the southeastern corner of the Andrews Resource Area covers 137,220 acres of public land. Also included within the area are 520 acres of private and 3,840 acres of state lands in the form of both inholding and cherrystem boundary parcels. The WSA straddles the district boundary with Lakeview and is located about 18 miles west of Fields within Harney County. The area contains rolling hills, relatively small, scattered ridgelines, and a large amount of very gently rolling to flat terrain. The area contains no known high value recreational opportunities and only one special feature which adds to the area's wilderness quality (the area contains what may be a newly discovered plant species). The most significant aspect of the Basque Hills study area is its large size.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation - Non-wilderness.

Rationale - Part of the rationale for recommending this area as non-wilderness is based upon conflicts with proposed range improvements. Much of the northern and western portions of the WSA have been identified as having high potential for range developments such as vegetative manipulation, seedings, and a variety of water developments. Another conflict involves the preferred alternative route for the proposed Pacific Power and Light Company utility corridor. This corridor passes across the northern third of the study area (see Map 6).

The management problem which could affect wilderness designation involves the lack of a manageable boundary. Most of the boundary problems are due to the presence of a substantial amount of low gently rolling to flat terrain and the fact that even though the boundaries are identifiable roads there is no physical barrier throughout much of this area to prevent off-road vehicle use. In addition to the above considerations, potential conflicts as a result of oil and gas development are possible in view of the recent interest in this district.

It is because of the above factors and because the wilderness values of this WSA are relatively low (primarily related to solitude as a result of the area's large size) that it is felt that wilderness would not be

the most appropriate use of this area. Even though the potential conflicts and management problems do not affect the entire study area, it is felt that the wilderness value of the remaining area does not outweigh its value as being available for other, non-wilderness activities.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDERNESS

Wilderness Study Area Name and Number: Hawksie-Walksie (Sage Hen Hills) 1-146 B

WSA Summary: The study area is located about 40 miles east of Adel, Oregon in Harney County. The unit contains 8,520 acres of public land on flat to moderately rolling terrain with low hills and erosion gullies. Vegetation is exclusively sagebrush association. The unit is contiguous to the Sage Hen Hills administratively endorsed wilderness proposal on the Charles Sheldon National Wildlife Range in the State of Nevada.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

Recommendation: No Wilderness

Rationale: Outside sights and sounds have a strong impact. The unit is next to Highway 140 and the openness of the terrain exposes it to impacts from the highway, especially noise levels. This makes it difficult to project long term management of the unit as wilderness. Values on the unit are sufficient to consider it as a WSA, however, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation are low even when considering the contiguous lands on the Sheldon.

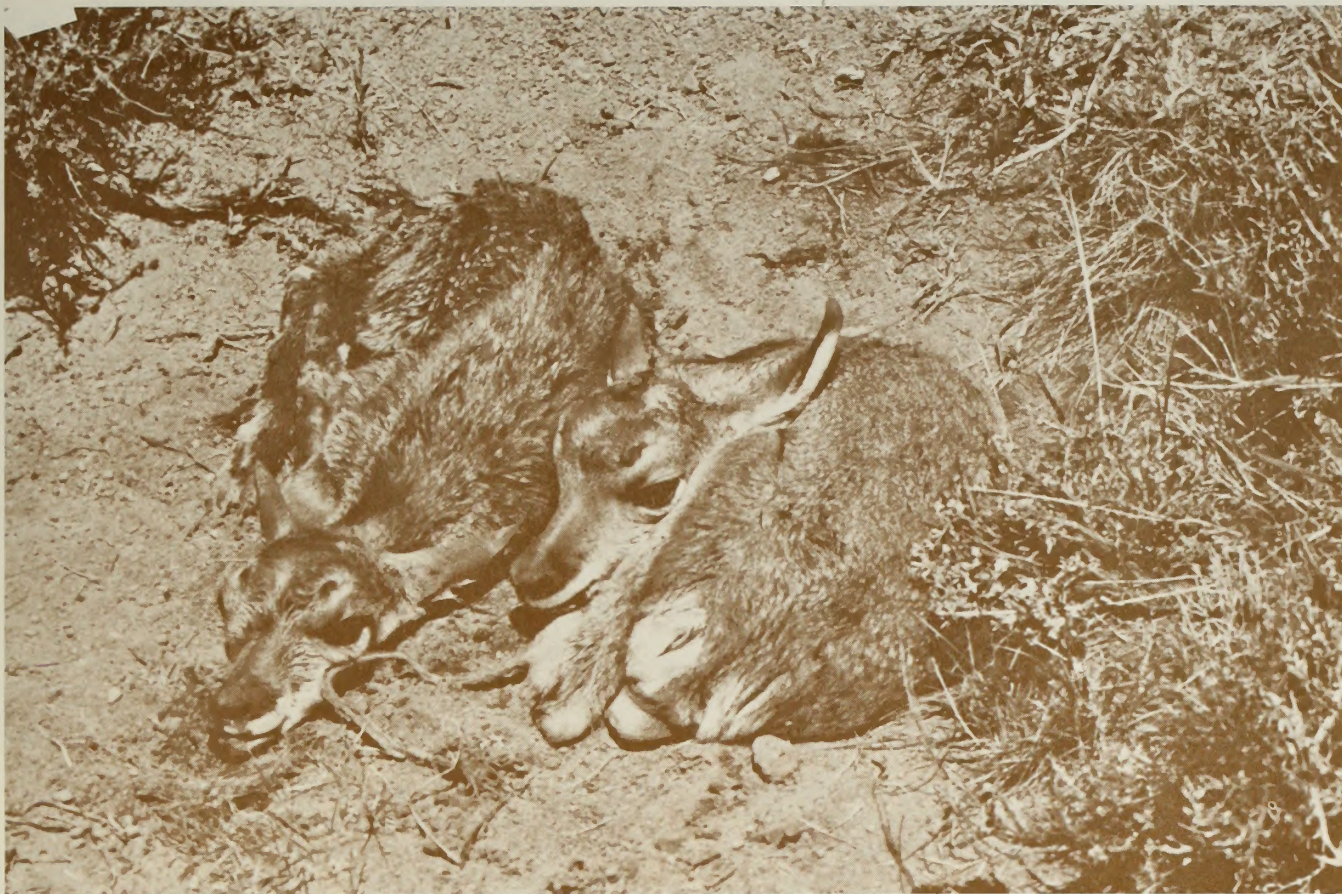
Conflicts: Conflict with two potential grazing projects occurs in this unit. From a resource standpoint, the best use of the area would be for livestock and wildlife forage production.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILDLIFE

The preferred alternative would provide habitat diversity for a wide variety of game and non-game species.

Big Game - Under the preferred alternative, 3,399 AUMs of competitive forage would be allocated to deer and antelope.

Bighorn Sheep - Under the preferred alternative, introduction of bighorn sheep would be permitted in those areas which are determined suitable including Pueblo Mountains, Lone Mountain, Buckskin Mountain-Tule Spring-Sand Gap areas, Mickey Hot Spring to Table Mountain, and Catlow Rim. All introductions and reintroduction would be coordinated with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.



Brush Management - Brushland conversion would be allowed on crucial wildlife habitats only when the primary benefits are for wildlife. Crucial wildlife habitat includes: deer winter, summer and fawning range, bighorn sheep range, riparian areas and within 1/2 mile of raptor nesting areas. Only 10% of the area within two miles of sage grouse strutting grounds would be converted unless brush conversion would be beneficial to sage grouse.

Brush would be allowed to re-invade 1,600 acres of burned, sprayed or mechanically treated land to re-establish forage and cover for deer and other wildlife. Portions of Frazier Field, Mud Creek and Krumbo allotments would provide deer winter range and the sprayed area in Hardie Summer Allotment would be improved for deer summer and fawning range.

Under the preferred alternative, selected seedings would be periodically grazed heavily to enhance forage benefits for antelope and geese.

Big sagebrush would be removed on approximately 16,000 acres to provide herbaceous cover for antelope. Rocky areas, sandy soils and cover strips would be left untreated for non-game wildlife.

Construction Projects - An environmental assessment would be required before new roads are built or existing roads upgraded. Human activities, such as equipment operation and blasting, would be restricted in raptor areas, sage grouse strutting

grounds and antelope kidding grounds during critical seasons.

Water Availability - Water developments primarily for wildlife would be established at three mile intervals where feasible in the large areas identified as being deficient.

Shorelines of significant reservoirs would be protected with some allowance made for livestock use.

Wetlands and Riparian Areas - Under the preferred alternative, wetlands, riparian areas and wet meadow areas would be managed to provide for soil stability, water quality, and wildlife and fish habitat.

Wetlands, including Mann Lake, Pueblo Slough, Juniper Lake, Rock Creek Reservoir and public land near Borax Lake would be managed to favor wildlife production and uses. Other wetland areas would be created, maintained or improved wherever economically feasible.

The following miles of stream and their associated riparian habitats have been identified as needing special attention. These streams will be managed as shown in Table 4. See Map 3 for locations.

Specific grazing systems are proposed and will be analyzed in the EIS. Other significant wet meadows will be maintained or improved for soil stability and

TABLE 4. PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE SPECIAL MANAGEMENT STREAMS

	Streams	Miles	Preferred Action
1.	Three-Mile Creek	2.2	Exclusion.
2.	Wildhorse Creek	6.7	Grazing System.
3.	South Fork Blitzen River	6.4	Grazing System.
4.	Little Blitzen River	6.8	Grazing System and Exclusion.
5.	Big Indian Creek	2.5	Exclusion.
6.	Trout Creek	17.8	Grazing System.
7.	Kiger Creek	5.8	Temporary Exclusion.
8.	Kings River	2.0	Grazing System.
9.	Mud Creek	5.0	Exclusion.
10.	Home Creek	6.2	Grazing System.
11.	Riddle Creek	7.2	Grazing System.
12.	Denio Creek	3.8	Grazing System.
13.	Fish Creek	2.2	Exclusion.
14.	McCoy Creek	9.3	Temporary Exclusion.
15.	Blitzen Tributaries	4.5	Grazing System.
16.	Upper Krumbo Creek	5.8	Grazing System.
17.	Upper Bridge Creek	4.7	Grazing System and Exclusion.
18.	Coyote Creek	2.7	Grazing System.
	Total	95.8	

water quality through proper grazing management. If monitoring indicates that meadows are not improving, other management techniques would be employed.

Fisheries - The preferred alternative would enhance fisheries by protecting existing habitat as discussed previously and creating new habitat. Seven fish impoundments would be constructed to increase opportunities for anglers. Warm water fish would be stocked in Solomon Canyon Reservoir and Waterhole Canyon Reservoir, if determined suitable by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Three sensitive-endemic fish species, Alvord chub, Borax Lake chub (on private property), and Catflow tui chub, are found in the Andrews Areas. These fish inhabit both tributary streams and sloughs in the area, and their habitat would be protected and enhanced through riparian and wetlands protection.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - RECREATION

Recreation Sites - Campgrounds would be maintained at Page Springs and Fish Lake. Primitive camping areas would be provided at Jackman Park, Lily Lake and Mann Lake. A primitive camping area would be established outside of the riparian zone at Cottonwood Creek in the Pueblo Mountains. The campground at Blitzen Crossing would be closed to provide for the area's restoration, and resolve conflicts with riparian zone management.

Lily Lake would be fenced to exclude livestock from

the campground and sensitive habitat of the lake shore. Livestock exclusion is necessary to protect this example of cirque lake ecology for educational and aesthetic purposes. Livestock water would be provided near the area. Vehicle use would also be controlled on the lake shore.

Further efforts will be made to identify potential areas for expansion of overnight facilities on the Steens in order to meet the growing demand.

Interpretive Sites - An interpretive program and visitor management plan would be developed for the Steens Mountain. Sites of interests would be identified and interpretive material would be developed to enhance the recreational experience.

Hunting and Fishing Opportunities - The quality of hunting and fishing opportunities would be enhanced by the proposed management for wildlife and fish habitat.

Grazing in riparian zones would be managed to enhance native trout habitat. BLM impoundments would be made available for stocking of warm water and cold water fisheries by the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife.

Under the preferred alternative, voluntary easements would be acquired from private landowners for public access to significant areas of public land for which there is no current legal access.

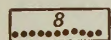

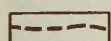
High Desert Trail - A route for the High Desert Trail would be designated through the Pueblos and Steens. The route would follow the proposal of the High Desert Trail Association with one exception. A

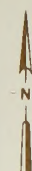
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Burns District, Oregon

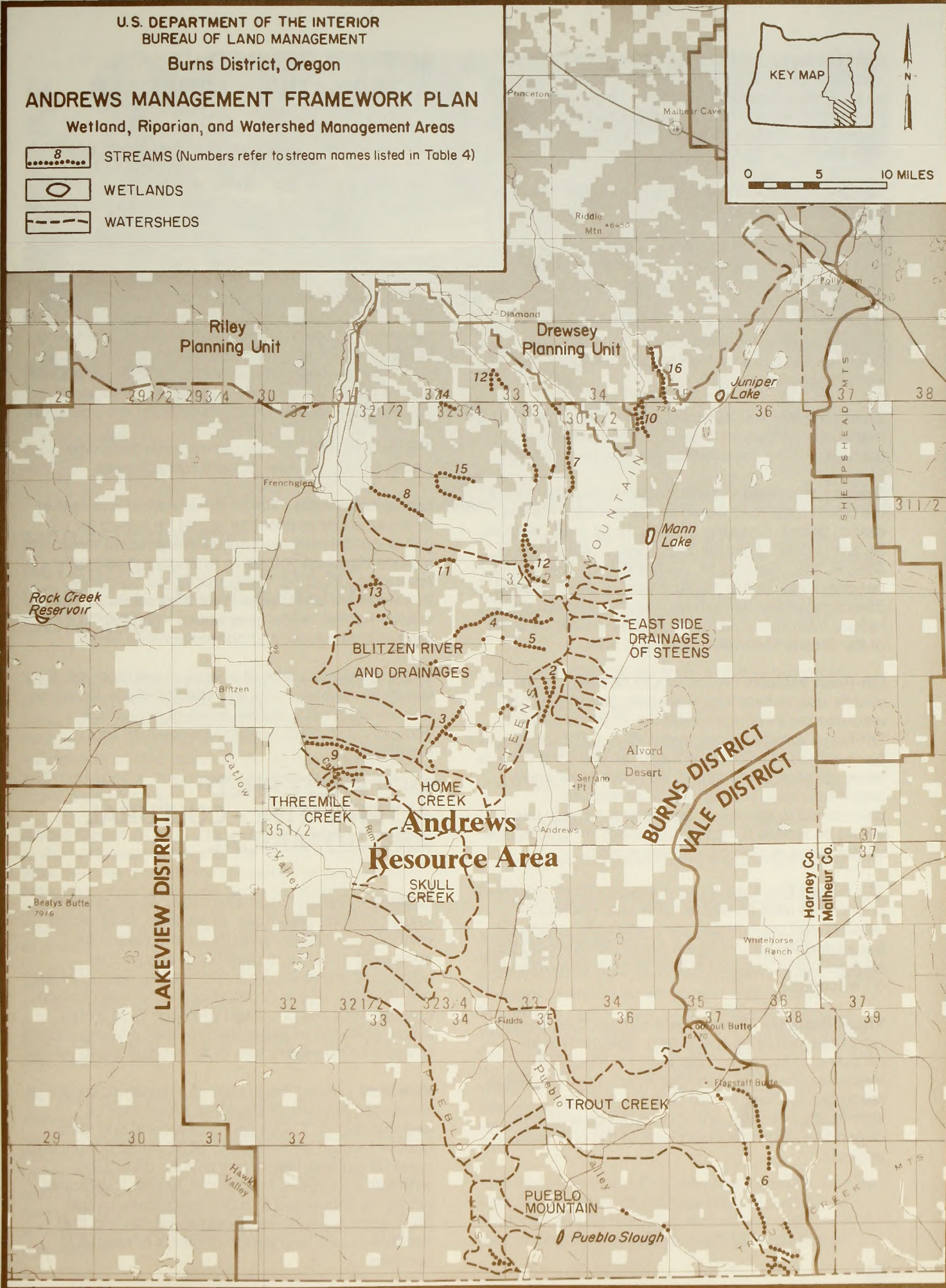
ANDREWS MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN

Wetland, Riparian, and Watershed Management Areas

-  8 STREAMS (Numbers refer to stream names listed in Table 4)
-  WETLANDS
-  WATERSHEDS



0 5 10 MILES



trail corridor along the ridge between Little Blitzen and Big Indian Gorges would be established in lieu of the Little Blitzen Canyon due to the sensitivity of the riparian zone. The trail would cross the river at Blitzen Crossing and then continue down the west side of the river.

The winter route across the Alvord Desert would be designated as proposed.

Winter Use Area - No winter use areas would be established on the Steens due to the increased management requirements and expense to provide for this activity.

Winter use on the Steens may be authorized on a case by case basis by the District Manager or his authorized officer.

Steens Vehicle Management Area - The vehicle management area on Steens Summit would be managed under the existing vehicle control plan.

Steens Loop Road - Under the preferred alternative, the South loop road would be closed from 4 miles east of Blitzen Crossing (T. 33S., R. 32 3/4E., Section 34, SW1/4NW1/4) to the Big Indian Scenic View (T. 33S., R. 33E., Section 14, SW1/4SE1/4). This would not only assist in the management of the proposed Steens Mountain wilderness area but also would reduce future administrative and maintenance costs of the Steens Mountain recreation area.

Off-Road Vehicles - Areas would be open to off-road vehicle use, except where specific restrictions for resource protection are established in the District Off-Road Vehicle Management Plan. ORV use would be restricted in shallow or fragile soils during periods when damage could occur. Sensitive plant areas would be closed during critical periods as determined in specific activity plans. Vehicle use would be limited to designated roads on crucial deer winter range during designated periods.

The Alvord Playa would be managed for all legitimate public land uses as well as ORV use. Recreation vehicles and commercial uses which do not impair the wilderness values of the Alvord WSA would be allowed until Congress makes its final determination on wilderness.

Visual Resource Management - Impacts on visual resources would be specifically analyzed for all proposed projects in Class II areas. Mitigating measures would be identified where possible. Visual resources in Class III and IV areas are less significant, however, impacts would be analyzed depending upon the magnitude of the proposed projects.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - MINERALS

The current national minerals management policy encourages exploration and development of domestic energy and mineral sources. Under the preferred alternative, public lands would be kept open for exploration, development or collection of mineral resources, while maintaining natural systems and protecting sensitive areas.

Minerals and energy related activities would be controlled to minimize surface disturbance and visual intrusions in Special Management Areas, according to their individual management prescriptions. BLM would review plans of operations for these areas and design mitigation measures to protect the special values of the area without jeopardizing the operation.

The salable and recreational minerals programs would continue under present management.

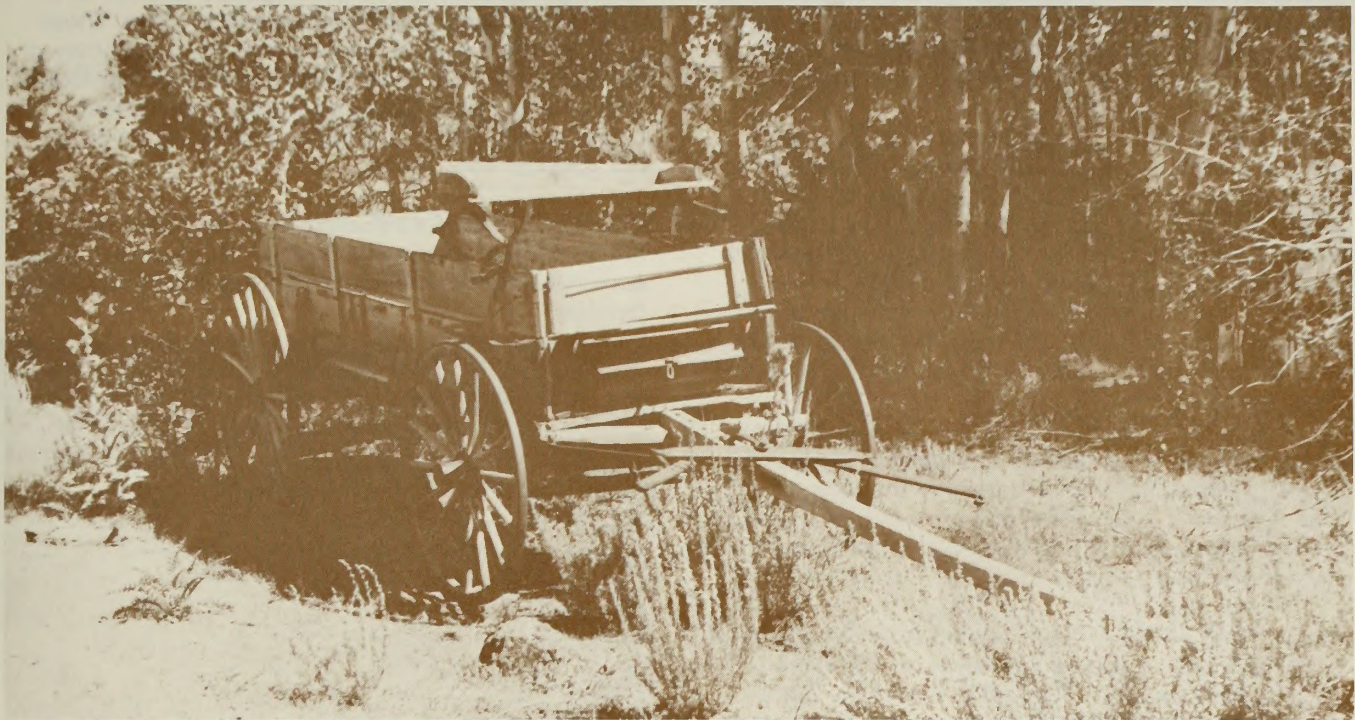
Leasable Minerals - Under the preferred alternative, all areas under application would be leased for oil, gas or geothermal resources. These leases would include standard notices to protect high-valued resources including: visual resources; sensitive, threatened or endangered plants or animals; crucial wildlife habitat; wilderness values in WSAs; recreational values; and nonreclaimable lands.

When individual plans of operation are received, they would be reviewed on a site-specific basis. Based on this environmental review, areas of no surface occupancy or restricted occupancy may be identified.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - CULTURAL AND BOTANICAL

Cultural - The preferred alternative would protect known cultural resources. In addition, BLM would continue to conduct inventories and clearance surveys in advance of projects to ensure that significant archaeological and historic resources are not affected. Where conflicts occur between known cultural sites and proposed projects, BLM would follow procedures prescribed by laws and regulations to avoid unnecessary loss or to mitigate these values.

Botanical - Under the preferred alternative, known or suspected habitats of sensitive, threatened or endangered (S, T & E) plants of federal and state concern would be protected. BLM would continue to conduct surveys before any ground disturbing activities take place. In addition, further inventories would be conducted to more specifically define population boundaries, essential habitat and the distribution and abundance of plants of special concern.



MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

The preferred alternative includes five potential Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). These areas have been identified as needing special management attention to protect certain resource values. A brief discussion of the values of each area and their special management needs follows. Refer to Table 5 and Map 4.

Alvord Desert ACEC - This potential ACEC is located at the northeastern edge of the Alvord Desert. The area includes a sequence of vegetation belts: from bare playa across alkaline flats and sand dunes to arid hillsides at the base of the eastern escarpment. This unique biological area contains a rich diversity of plant and animal communities of the northern Great Basin Desert. The boundaries of this potential ACEC have been adjusted from the original proposal to make them more definable and manageable. On the west, the boundary would follow the edge of the playa. On the east, it would follow the ridge to an unmaintained road.

The potential Alvord Desert ACEC would be managed to protect its scientific and educational values. The area would be designated as an off-road vehicle exclusion area to prevent damage to the fragile habitat. Livestock would remain under a winter grazing system, which has allowed the vegetation to remain in good condition. Mineral and energy related activities would be controlled to minimize surface disturbance.

A 3,840 acre area in the northern portion of this potential ACEC will be managed more stringently to preserve its natural condition with a minimum of human disturbance. This area contains the following habitats which fill Research Natural Area needs:

- a sand dune series from active unvegetated dunes to completely stabilized dunes
- a big sagebrush-greasewood community
- a bare playa and playa margin communities
- a greasewood-saltgrass community
- a big sagebrush-spiny hopsage community
- a shadscale-spiny hopsage-budsage community

Steens Scenic ACEC - Under the preferred alternative, the proposed Steens Summit ACEC and portions of the potential Steens Scenic ACEC would be recommended for wilderness designation. Wilderness designation would protect the special values of those areas. Therefore, the Steens Scenic ACEC would include only those portions which are not included in the area recommended for wilderness, unless the area is not designated wilderness by Congress. In that event, the entire original proposed area would be designated an ACEC.

The Steens Scenic ACEC has been identified for its high scenic value: the craggy base of the Steens Mountain escarpment, the vista of the east rim, and glacial cirques and valleys, such as Kiger Gorge.

These areas would be managed under Class II Visual Resources Management to protect their scenic value. No developments or improvements that are evident in the characteristic landscape would be permitted.

Borax Lake ACEC - This potential ACEC would include a buffer zone of public land surrounding the privately owned Borax Lake. Borax Lake is the largest thermal lake in Oregon. The Borax Lake chub, a sensitive endemic species, is found here in a higher temperature environment than any fish in Oregon. The lake and surrounding marshlands provide excellent habitat for quite a diversity of bird species and other wildlife, as well as several sensitive plant species.

Borax Lake ACEC would be managed to protect the diversity of plant and animal life that inhabits this area. Livestock grazing and minerals and energy related activities would be managed to protect the habitat values of the area.

Alvord Peak ACEC - This potential ACEC is a rugged and highly scenic area with a series of 10 peaks ranging from 6200 to 7100 feet in elevation. Bighorn sheep make significant use of the Alvord Peak's area in the summertime. Its isolation, water availability and escape cover make it excellent habitat for bighorn sheep.

The Alvord Peak ACEC would be managed to protect and enhance bighorn sheep habitat. Mineral and energy related activities would be controlled to minimize surface disturbance and impacts to visual quality. Human disturbance would be kept at a minimum during crucial winter months and during lambing season. Livestock grazing would also be managed to protect or enhance bighorn sheep habitat values.

Picket Rim ACEC - This potential ACEC would include approximately 10 miles of continuous rimrock that supports an abundant population of

nesting raptors. The rim is composed of a series of rows of rimrock placed one above the other. These tiers provide excellent nesting habitat for a variety of species. The 1980 raptor survey of Picket Rim found active nests of the following five species: golden eagle, prairie falcon, American kestrel, short-eared owl and common raven.

This ACEC would be managed primarily for raptors and to protect their nesting areas. Surface disturbing activities would be restricted during crucial nesting periods.

**TABLE 5. PREFERRED
ALTERNATIVE - AREAS OF
CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL
CONCERN**

Unit Name	Acres
1. Alvord Desert	16,700
2. Steens	14,000
3. Borax Lake	520
4. Alvord Peak	14,700
5. Pickett Rim	4,000

**TABLE 6. PREFERRED
ALTERNATIVE - RESEARCH
NATURAL AREAS**

Unit Name	Acres
1. Little Blitzen	2,200
2. Little Wildhorse Lake	45
3. South Fork Willow Creek	200
4. Rooster Comb	490
5. Pueblo Foothills	1,925
6. Tum Tum Lake	1,700
7. Long Draw	210
8. Mickey Basin	300





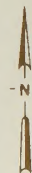
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Burns District, Oregon

ANDREWS MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN

Special Management Areas

-  AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN (ACEC)
-  RESEARCH NATURAL AREAS (RNAs)



0 5 10 MILES



MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - RESEARCH NATURAL AREAS

Under the preferred alternative, eight areas would be nominated for designation as Research Natural Areas (RNA) to be preserved for research and educational purposes. Refer to Table 6 and Map 4. The eight areas might be designated as "Areas of Critical Environmental Concern with Research Natural Area Values" if pending changes in RNA designation procedures indicate "ACEC" designation would be more appropriate and provide adequate protection.

Human disturbance in RNAs would be minimized. Livestock grazing would be managed to maintain or enhance the condition of the vegetative community. Recreation, mineral and energy related activities would be controlled to minimize surface disturbance.

The BLM will continue to inventory for community or habitat types that are in good condition and need representation in the Oregon Natural Heritage Plan.

Little Blitzen - This nominated RNA would include the upper two miles of Little Blitzen Gorge, an area totalling 2,200 acres. This area contains the following plant communities or habitats:

- mid to high elevation vernal pond
- stream system originating in subalpine
- aspen grove
- alpine communities on Steens Mountain including snow deflation and moderate snow cover communities
- late-lying snowbeds
- a token representation of a high elevation fescue grassland

This area also has one of the highest concentration of sensitive plants in southeastern Oregon.

This RNA is in the Steens Summit allotment, where no grazing use would be licensed. The west boundary would be fenced to eliminate trespass use.

Little Wildhorse Lake - The boundaries on this nominated RNA would be adjusted to include a total of 45 acres of the shelf which contains Little Wildhorse Lake. This pristine high altitude lake is an excellent representative for the mid to high elevation lake cell.

The area is naturally protected from livestock grazing. Recreational use, such as overnight camping, would be discouraged at the lake.

The acreage of this RNA is reduced to include only the primary cell need. As originally proposed, the RNA would have a substantial negative impact on the existing grazing system in the Wildhorse Allotment.

South Fork Willow Creek - This nominated RNA contains a 200-acre portion of the cirque from which South Fork Willow Creek originates. Two major habitat types are found in this area:

- 1 alpine communities on Steens, including downslope snow accumulation areas and upper cirque communities

- 1 stream system originating in a glacial cirque

This area has no special management needs, since it is naturally protected by steep slopes on all sides.

Rooster Comb - This nominated RNA would include the lower one and one-half mile of Little Blitzen Gorge above the Riddle Ranch, a total of 490 acres. The mountain mahogany community and black cottonwood riparian areas are in good condition, showing little evidence of cattle use. Cattle grazing would be limited to fall use to protect the riparian zone and maintain the condition of the RNA.

Pueblo Foothills - This nominated RNA includes a portion of the Cottonwood Creek Drainage, totalling 1,925 acres. This area has good representative communities of narrowleaf cottonwood and Mormon tea. The Pueblo Foothills also contain a high concentration of sensitive and special interest plants.

This RNA would be fenced to exclude livestock and improve the condition of the stream.

Tum Tum Lake - This nominated RNA would include Tum Tum Lake plus a small area to the north, totalling 1,700 acres. This area contains a low elevation vernal pond and several significant salt desert shrub and desert shrub communities.

Fencing would not be required since cattle usage is minimal due to poor forage values. Mineral and energy related activities would be controlled to minimize surface disturbance.

Long Draw - This nominated RNA would include 210 acres of a sagebrush-Indian ricegrass- needlegrass community, located three miles southeast of Hawk Valley. The area would be fenced to exclude cattle grazing and maintain the excellent condition of this grass community.

Two areas considered for RNAs, East Kiger Plateau and Big Springs Table, would not be designated since other areas may offer better sites for high elevation fescue and black sagebrush communities.

Mickey Basin Winterfat Stand - This nominated RNA would include a 300-acre winterfat stand located one mile south of Mickey Hot Springs. At one time, winterfat was probably much more common in this area, but today a good condition winterfat stand is a unique find and deserves special protection.

This RNA would be fenced to keep out livestock and horses and allow natural improvement of the condition of the site. Mineral and energy related activities would be controlled to minimize surface disturbance.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - WILD HORSES

Under the preferred alternative, there would be three herd management areas (HMAs): South Steens, Heath Creek-Sheepshead and Alvord-Tule Springs. Refer to Map 5.

The Alvord-Sheepshead HMA as originally proposed encompasses 235,163 acres. It would be divided into two smaller units by existing fences: Heath Creek-Sheepshead HMA (72,800 acres) and Alvord-Tule Springs HMA (162,363 acres). In the Alvord-Tule Springs HMA, the district boundary between Burns and Vale will be fenced splitting the Burns and Vale horse herds into two separate management units.

Herd numbers would be kept at levels consistent with existing herd management plans, as shown in the table below. Maintaining these herd numbers would require roundups every 3-5 years. In the past, when the populations have been controlled at these levels, adequate habitat has been available for horses and other uses.

TABLE 7. WILD HORSE HERD MANAGEMENT AREAS

Herd Management Areas	Horse Numbers
South Steens	150-300
Heath Creek-Sheepshead	50-100
Alvord-Tule Springs	80-140

The 50-100 horses in the Heath Creek-Sheepshead herd use the Burns side of the HMA seasonally for four months in the winter. Forage allocation for wild horses would be consistent with existing use. See Table 2.

Domestic horse grazing would be restricted in all HMAs.

All proposed livestock management fences would be allowed in herd management areas. The HMAs are large enough to supply adequate habitat for horses with the proposed fences. Fencing will not significantly interfere with the horses' wild and free-roaming habits.

Under the preferred alternative, superior wild stock would be transferred between herds to improve herd quality over time. No domesticated stock would be utilized for this purpose.



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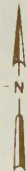
Burns District, Oregon

ANDREWS MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN

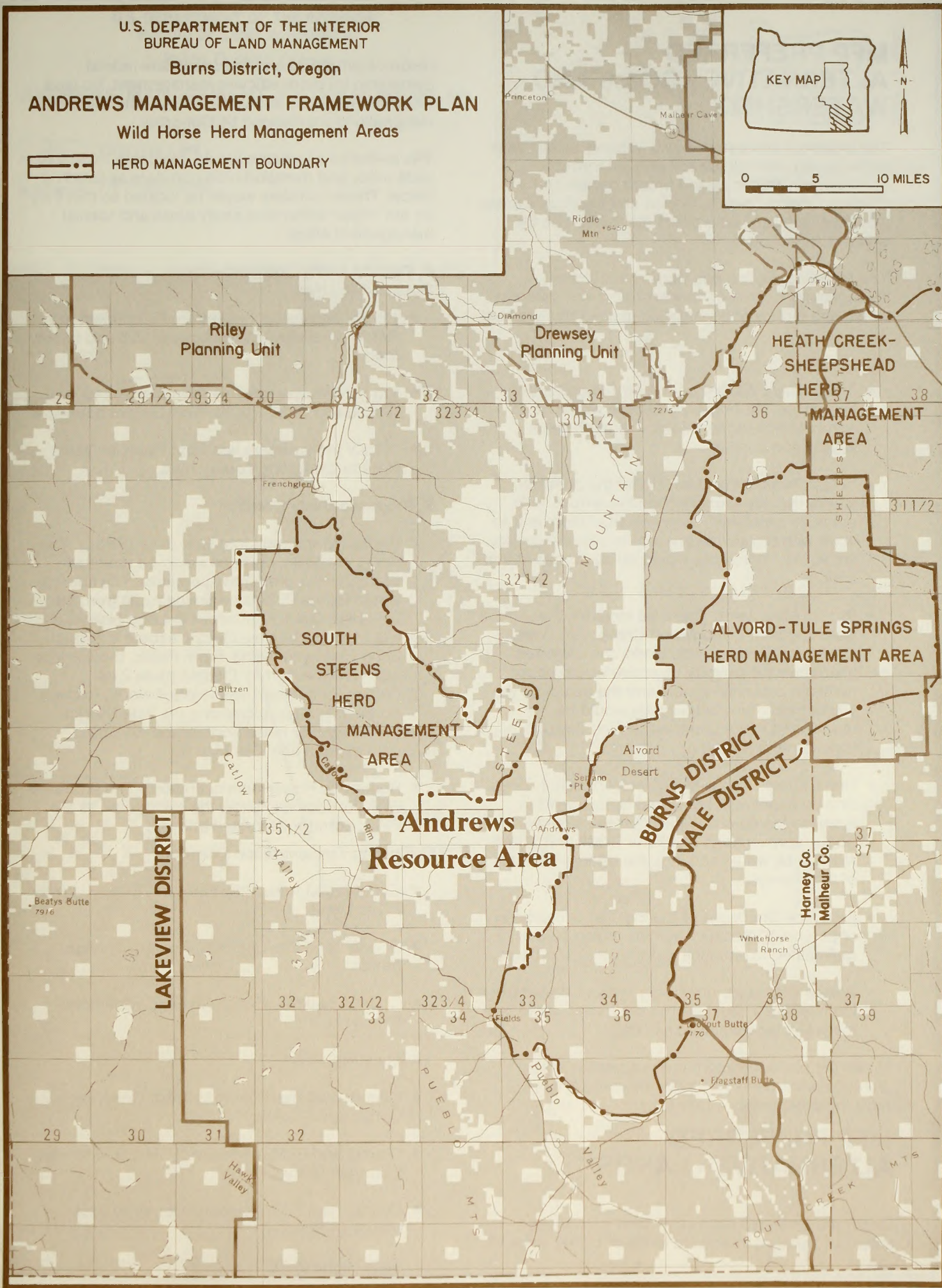
Wild Horse Herd Management Areas



HERD MANAGEMENT BOUNDARY



0 5 10 MILES



MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - SOILS AND WATERSHED

The preferred alternative would improve or maintain water quality and reduce soil erosion through management practices, and proper design and maintenance of projects. Gullies and fragile soil areas would be stabilized where feasible to improve the water quality of streams.

The following watersheds would receive special management to protect riparian zones and perennial water, and reduce sedimentation in streams. See Map 3.

- Trout Creek Watershed. Under the preferred alternative, the primary objective would be to enhance watershed values, including water supply and quality.
- Blitzen River Watershed. Under the preferred alternative, the primary objective would be to enhance watershed values on BLM land, and to work with private landowners to improve private lands. Wild horse use would be controlled in this area.
- Pueblo Mountains. This area includes the watersheds of Cottonwood Creek, Van Horn Creek and Denio Creek. Under the preferred alternative the primary objective would be to maintain perennial waters and the quality of the watersheds. Riparian habitats would be maintained in the upper watershed through proper management.
- Home Creek, Three-Mile Creek and Skull Creek. Stream improvements would be designed to increase the on-site values of these streams. Such improvements on Home Creek and Three-Mile Creek would enhance the wilderness values of these areas.
- East Side Drainages of Steens. The watersheds of perennial streams would be improved and maintained to enhance water quality and flows.
- Blitzen Drainages (including Indian Creek and Little Blitzen Creek). These drainages would be managed for watershed values.

Under the preferred alternative, vegetative cover would be improved in all other watersheds which have the potential for improvement.

MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - LANDS

Under the preferred alternative, land exchanges would be pursued to acquire lands of higher value to

resource programs and to consolidate federal ownership for more efficient management. No land disposals would be allowed in WSAs until wilderness designations are decided by Congress.

The preferred alternative would designate 2,000 foot wide utility and transportation corridors as listed below. These corridors would be located so that they do not impair wilderness study areas and special management areas.

A. Existing Utility Corridors -Harney Electric Cooperative Lines

- 115 KV transmission line from Frenchglen to Fields, paralleling State Highway 205 and county road.
- 115 KV transmission line from Fields, east near Whitehorse Ranch, to the Vale District boundary.
- 115 KV transmission line from Fields to Denio, Nevada paralleling county road.

B. Proposed Utility Corridor

- Pacific Power and Light Company (PP&L). The newly proposed corridor would be modified slightly in the preferred alternative. The corridor would follow PP&L's proposed route from the Lakeview District boundary to Long Hollow. It would follow Harney Electric's route 1 through Long Hollow to Fields. From Fields, the corridor would follow Harney Electric route 2 to Calderwood Desert Well. Here it would follow a northeastern route crossing the Vale District boundary four miles north of the existing transmission line. See Map 6.
- Bonneville Power Administration - The proposed BPA corridor will follow the same route as the PP&L corridor described above.

C. Existing Transportation Corridors

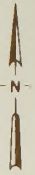
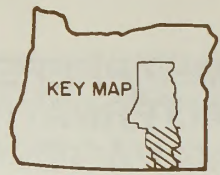
- County road from Folly Farm (on State Highway 78) to Denio.
- County road from Fields to Roaring Springs Ranch.
- County road from Trout Creek to Whitehorse Ranch.
- State Highway 205.
- County road from Denio to Trout Creek via Cottonwood Creek.
- County and BLM road from "P" Hill area to Hart Mountain Refuge.
- County road from Reichens Corner to Jack Mountain Road.
- State Highway 78.

Burns District, Oregon

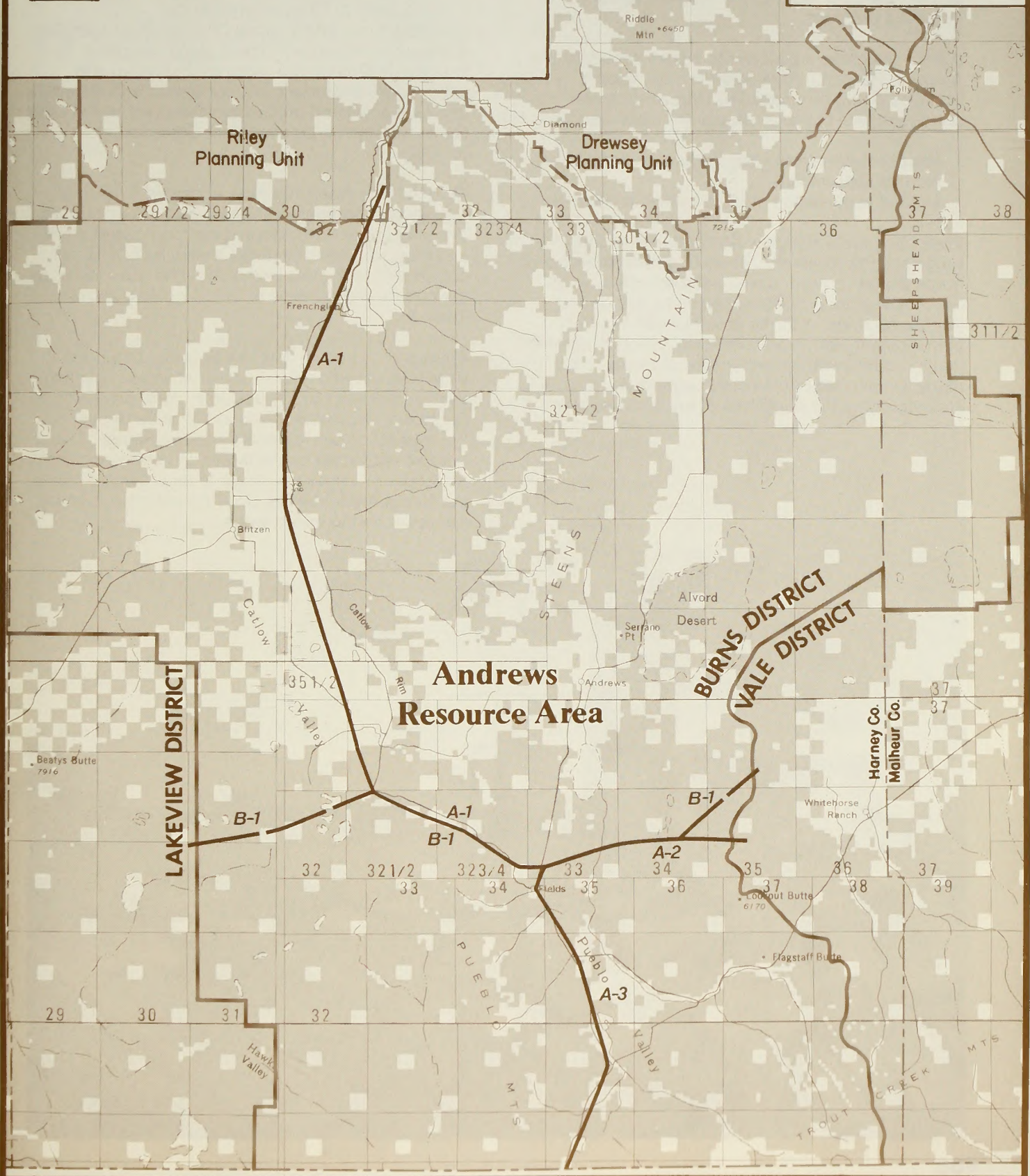
ANDREWS MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN

Utility Corridors

- A-1** EXISTING LINE
B-1 PROPOSED LINE



0 5 10 MILES



MFP PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE - FIRE MANAGEMENT

Under the preferred alternative, both fire suppression and the use of prescribed fire would be emphasized in the fire program.

A fire management plan would be developed for the Andrews Resource Area. Wildfire suppression activities would be divided into three categories consistent with the land use plan's objectives:

Priority suppression - most aggressive effort.

Normal suppression.

Limited suppression - least aggressive effort.

Prescribed fire would play an important role in rangeland improvement. Planned ignition prescribed burns would be used in many of the brush control and seeding projects discussed in the Range and Wildlife sections. With the development of a fire management plan, more extensive use of unplanned ignition burns with limited suppression would be made. Unplanned burns could be valuable in accomplishing the objectives of the land use plan.

CONSISTENCY WITH STATE AND LOCAL LAND USE PLANS

All BLM planning and major actions are coordinated with the State of Oregon through the Intergovernmental Relations Division. BLM planning is also coordinated with county land use plans. All counties in Oregon are required to develop and adopt comprehensive plans consistent with statewide planning goals and guidelines developed by the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC).

The Andrews Resource Area is located in Harney County and portions of Malheur and Lake Counties. These counties have adopted comprehensive plans, and they are presently under review by LCDC for compliance with statewide goals. The relationship of the preferred alternative to LCDC goals is shown in Table 8.

There are no known conflicts between proposed BLM land use allocations or management direction with land use or natural resource plans, programs or policies of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge or the Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge. There are also no known conflicts with Indian tribal lands, resources or values which are to be protected under the Native American Religious Freedoms Act or any treaties covering ceded lands.



TABLE 8. RELATIONSHIP OF THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE LCDC GOALS¹

LCDC Statewide Goal Number Number and Description	Discussion
1. To insure citizen involvement in all phases of the planning process.	BLM's land-use planning is a process providing for public input at various stages. Public input was specifically requested in developing planning criteria, the preferred alternative and other alternatives to be analyzed in the EIS. Public input will continue to be utilized in the EIS and final decision processes.
2. To establish a land-use planning process and policy framework as a basis for all decisions and action.	The preferred alternative has been developed in accordance with the land-use planning authorized by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 which provides a policy framework for all decisions and actions.
5. To conserve open space and protect natural and scenic resources.	The Bureau planning system considered natural and scenic resources in development of the preferred alternative. Fencing and vegetation manipulation projects which would impact natural and scenic resources, will be carefully assessed in the grazing EIS.
6. To maintain and improve the quality of the air, water and land resources.	The Federal and State minimum water standards would be maintained under the preferred alternative. Prescribed burning and chemical herbicide application for brush control in the proposed action would not significantly affect air quality. Under the preferred alternative, BLM would manage the rangeland resources on a sustained-yield basis.
8. To satisfy the recreational needs of the citizens of the State and visitors.	The BLM actively coordinates its outdoor recreation and land-use planning efforts with those of other agencies to establish integrated management objectives on a regional basis. Under the preferred alternative, opportunities would be provided to meet recreational needs.
9. To diversify and improve the economy of the State.	The preferred alternative would induce economic gains in the long term due to increased forage production, resulting in improved local and State economy. Mineral and energy exploration and development would be encouraged on public lands to help diversify the local and State economy.

¹ The other goals developed by the LCDC are not generally applicable to the preferred alternative.

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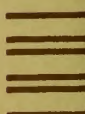
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